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NEW HISTORY
OF THE
HOLY BIBLE,
FROM THE
BEGINNING OF THE WORLD,
TO THE
ESTABLISHMENT OF CHRISTIANITY.

WITH
ANSWERS TO MOST OF THE CONTROVERTED QUESTIONS,
DISSERTATIONS UPON THE MOST REMARKABLE
PASSAGES, AND A CONNECTION OF PROFANE
HISTORY ALL ALONG.

To which are added,

NOTES, EXPLAINING DIFFICULT TEXTS, RECTIFYING MIS-
TRANSLATIONS, AND RECONCILING SEEMING
CONTRADICTIONS.

The whole illustrated with proper MAPS, &c.

BY THE REV. THOMAS STACKHOUSE, A. M.
LATE VICAR OF BEENHAM IN BERKSHIRE.

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THE
HISTORY
OF THE
B I B L E.

BOOK VII.

CHAP. III.

From the Death of Nehemiah, to the Death of Antiochus Epiphanes.

The HISTORY.

MANASSEH, as Josephus calls him, (for we have now left the sacred history, and have nothing but the books of the Maccabees, Philo Judæus, and Josephus, with some fragments of the Greek and Latin writers, to depend on,) being expelled from Jerusalem, with several others who would not submit to Nehemiah's order for their parting with their idolatrous wives, went to Samaria, (as we said before,) and there put himself under the protection of Sanballat, his father-in-law; who applying to Darius Nothus (the then king of Persia,) did so far insinuate himself into his favour, as to obtain a grant for the building of a temple on mount Gerizzim, near Samaria, and for making Manasseh, his son-in-law, the high-priest of it.

The Samaritans † were originally the Cutheans, and such other of the eastern nations, as Esarhaddon, after the

† If we believe, their chronicle, (which they tell us is of great antiquity, though others, who have examined it, will not allow it to be as old as Constantine's days,) they give us an account of their origin quite different from what we gather

A. M.
3595, &c.
Ant. Chris.
408. &c.
from 1
Macc i. to
vi. 7 ; 2
Macc. iii. to
x. and from
Jos. Hist.
lib. xi. c. 7.
to lib. 12.
c. 14.

The build-
ing of the
temple on
mount Ge-
rizzim, and
the enmity
between the
Jews and
Samaritans.

A. M. the deportation of the Israelites, planted there; but after
 3596, &c. this temple was built, and Samaria become a common re-
 Ant. Chif. fuge for all refractory Jews, this mixture of inhabitants
 408, &c. in a short time produced a change in religion. For where-
 from 1. as they had hitherto worshipped the God of Israel, in con-
 Macc. 1. to junction with the gods of the east, from whence they
 vi. 7; 2. came, when once the Jewish worship came to be settled
 Macc. iii. to among them, and the book of the law of Moses to be
 Jos. Hif. read publicly, they conformed themselves wholly to the
 lib. 11. c. 7. worship
 to lib. 12. c. 14.

from sacred writ. They pretend to be descended from Joseph by Ephraim, in a direct line; and that when Joskua entered into the promised land, he caused a temple to be built upon mount Gerizzim, and appointed one Buz of the seed of Aaron, to officiate as high-priest, from whom they have an exact genealogy, and uninterrupted succession ever since. They neither own Jeroboam's schism, nor the transmigration of the ten tribes, but give this account of their leaving their country, and their returning to it again:—That when the kings of Jerusalem and Syria had revolted against Bachtnezzar, (so they call Nebuchadnezzar,) he came with an army, and took Jerusalem, and thence marching to the Shechemites, (for that's the name they give themselves,) ordered them to leave their country in seven days, upon pain of military execution, which they readily did: That when he sent Persians to inhabit the cities which they had left, they could not live there, because the fruits which seemed fair to the eye, were tainted with poison, and so destroyed them: That upon complaints of this, the king consulted some of the ancient inhabitants of these provinces, who informed him, that the only remedy was, to send the Hebrews back again into their own country, which when he consented to, a place was appointed for their general rendezvous: That when they came to this place, a dispute arose between them, whether they should go and rebuild the temple of Jerusalem, or that of Gerizzim, and when Zerubbabel was for the former, and Sanballat for the latter, each pleading the sanction of the Pentateuch, and each pretending that the copy of his opponent was corrupt, they resolved to end the controversy by a fiery trial: That Zerubbabel's copy being thrown into the fire, was immediately consumed, but then Sanballat's endured the flames three times together, and received no manner of harm; where upon the king honoured the Shechemites with rich presents, and sent Sanballat at the head of the ten tribes, to take possession of mount Gerizzim. But who sees not that this whole history (full of fallacies and absurdities as it is) was only invented to wipe off the shame and disgrace of the Samaritans, for being the offspring of proselytes, and a medley of foreign nations? *Basnage's History of the Jews*, lib. 2. c. 1.; and *Universal History* lib. 2. c. 1.

worship of the true God, and in their performance of this, were as exact as the Jews themselves. The Jews however, looking on them as apostates, hated them to such a degree, as to avoid all manner of converse and communication with them. This hatred first began from the malice with the Samaritans expressed against them, both in the rebuilding of their temple, and in the repairing the walls of their city. It was afterwards much increased by the apostacy of Manasseh, and his setting up an altar and temple, in opposition to those at Jerusalem; and it was all along kept up, on account of some particular tenets wherein the two nations were known to disagree. For the Samaritans received no other Scriptures than the five books of Moses; they rejected all traditions, and adhered only to the written word itself; and they maintained, that mount Gerizzim *, whereon their temple was built, was the

A. M.
3596, &c.
Ant. Chri.
408, &c.
from 1.
Macc. i. to
vi. 7. ; 2.
Macc. iii. to
x. and from
Jost. Hist.
lib. i. c. 7.
to lib. 12.
c. 14.

* Josephus, in his Jewish Antiquities, (lib. 13. c. 6.), relates a dispute which arose in Egypt, in the reign of Ptolemy Philopater, between the Jews and Samaritans concerning their temples. The Samaritans maintained, that their temple upon mount Gerizzim was the only true temple of the Lord; and the Jews, on the contrary, affirmed that theirs at Jerusalem was the only true one. The dispute was brought before the king; advocates on both sides were named: and it was agreed, that they who did not make their allegations good, should be condemned to death. Both parties promised that they would produce all their testimonies from the law only. Andronicus, advocate for the Jews, spake first, and proved so very evidently from the Scriptures, the antiquity of the temple of Jerusalem, the succession of the high priests, and the value which the Asiatic princes always had for that holy place, while, at the same time, they never so much as thought of the temple at Gerizzim, that the king and his assessors declared he had carried his cause, and ordered Sablaeus and Theodosius, the advocates for the Samaritans, to be put to death. Whether there be any reality in this account of Josephus or no, it is certain that the Samaritans, in behalf of mount Gerizzim, have to plead, — That there Abraham, (Gen. xii. 6 7. and xiii. 4.), and there Jacob, (Gen. xxxiii. 20.), built altars unto God, and by their offering up sacrifices thereon consecrated that place above all others to his worship; that for this reason, God himself appointed it (Deut. xxvii. 12.) to be the hill of blessing; and that accordingly Joshua on his entrance upon the land of Canaan, caused the blessings of God, to such as would observe his laws, from hence to be pronounced; and, lastly, that when

he

A. M.
3596, &c.
Ant. Chris.
408, &c.
from 1.

the only proper place for the worship of God; and from this variety of causes did ensue all the hatred and virulence, which, in the course of this history, we shall have but too frequent occasion to take notice of.

Macc. i. to
vi. 7.; 2.
Macc. ii. to
x. and from
Jof. Hist.
lib. 11. c. 7.
to lib. 12.
c. 14.

After the death of Nehemiah, who was the last governor that the kings of Persia sent to Jerusalem, Judea being added to the prefecture of Syria, was from thence forward subjected to the rulers of that province; and under them the administration of all public affairs, both civil and ecclesiastical, was committed to the high-priest, which made that office much more coveted than it used to be, and many times tempted those who had no right to it, to invade it.

Johanan,
the high-
priest kills
his brother
Joshua in
the temple,
and is fined
for it.

Upon the death of Darius Nothus, Artaxerxes, who, for his extraordinary memory, is by the Greeks called *Μνημον*, or *the remembrancer*, succeeded his father in the throne of Persia; and towards the latter end of his reign, made Bagoses governor of Syria and Phœnicia, who took upon him to confer the pontificate, even while Johanan the high-priest (who had been several years invested with it) was alive, upon the high-priest's brother Joshua, and who accordingly came with this grant to Jerusalem, in order to take possession of the office. ^a But while the one endeavoured by force to get possession,

he passed the Jordan, he built here an altar of the twelve stones, which he took out of the river in his passage, Deut. xxviii. 2.—7. according to what God had commanded him by Moses. But herein the Samaritans are guilty of a great prevarication; for they have changed the words in the text of Deuteronomy, and instead of mount Ebal (as it is in the original) have put mount Gerizzim, the better to serve their cause. The truth of the matter is, since Manasseh was resolved to make a schism in the Jewish church, and Sanballat to build a temple for him, the reasons above mentioned might be inducement enough for them to make choice of that place, rather than any other; but from thence to pretend to vie with the temple at Jerusalem, is highly arrogant; because the Jews have authentic testimonies, that the public exercise of the true religion was settled among them, and solemnised at Jerusalem long before this temple at Gerizzim was thought of. In short, the religious observances of the Jewish worship did always attend the ark of the covenant, but the ark was never once at Gerizzim, nor indeed was it fixed in any settled place, until David took it to his palace at Jerusalem, and Solomon had built a temple for it in the same city; *Prideaux's Connection*, anno 409; *Calmet's Dictionary*, under the word *Gerizzim*.

^a Jewish Antiq. lib. 11. c. 7.

sion, and the other by force to keep him from it, it so happened, that Johanan slew Jothua in the inner court of the temple; which, when Bagoses heard, he came in great wrath to Jerusalem; went into the temple, notwithstanding the remonstrances that were made against it; and, having taken a thorough cognizance of the fact, imposed a mulct for the punishment of it, and obliged the priests to pay, out of the public treasury, for every lamb that they offered in the daily sacrifice*, the sum of fifty drachms, which is about one pound eleven shillings and three pence of our money.

A. M.
3526, &c.
Ant. Chris.
408, &c.
from 1
Macc. i. to
vi. 7.; 2
Macc. iii to
x. and from
Jof. Hist.
l. b. xi c 7.
to lib 12.
c 14.

After

* This, if extended only to the ordinary sacrifices which were offered every day, amounted to 365,000 drachms for the whole year, which is no more than one thousand one hundred and forty pounds twelve shillings and sixpence of our money: But, if it extended also to the extraordinary sacrifices, which, on solemn days, were added to the ordinary, it will come to about half as much more. For the ordinary sacrifices, which were offered every day, and therefore called *the daily sacrifices*, were a lamb in the morning and another in the evening, which are called *the morning and evening sacrifices*; and these, in the whole year, came to seven hundred and thirty. But, besides these, there were added, on every Sabbath, two lambs more, Numb. xxviii. 9. 10.; on every new moon, seven, Numb. xxviii. 11.; on each of the seven days of the paschal solemnity, seven, Numb. xxviii. 16. — 24.; besides one more on the second day, when the wave-sheaf was offered, Lev. xxiii. 12.; on the day of Pentecost, seven, ver. 17. 18.; on the feast of trumpets, seven, Numb. xxviii. 27.; on the great day of expiation, seven, chap. xxix. 8.; on each of the seven days of the feast of tabernacles, fourteen, chap. xxix. 13.; and on the eighth day, seven, Numb. xxix. 36.; so that the additional lambs being, three hundred seventy and one, these, if reckoned to the other, make the whole number annually offered at the morning and evening sacrifices, to be eleven hundred and one: And therefore, if the mulct of fifty drachms a lamb were paid for them all, it would make the whole of it to amount to 55,050 drachms, which comes to seventeen hundred and twenty pounds six shillings and threepence of our money. But even this sum being too small for a national mulct, it seems most probable, that all the lambs which were offered in the temple in any sacrifice, and upon any account whatever, were taken into the reckoning. We may observe, however, that whatever this mulct was the payment of it lasted no longer than seven years; for, on the death of Artaxerxes, the changes and revolutions which then happened in the empire, made a change in the government of Syria, and he that succeeded Bagoses in that province no farther exacted it; *Prideaux's Connection, anno 366.*

A. M.
3596, &c.
Ant. Chris.
408, &c.
from 1
Macc. i. to
vi. 7; 2
Macc. iii to
x. and from
Jof. H. ft.
l. b. 11. c. 7.
to lib. 12.
c. 14.

After the death of Artaxerxes *Mνησαν*, Ochus succeeded his father, but obtained the crown * by very wicked and indirect means. He reigned however for one and twenty years, after which ^b he was poisoned by his favourite eunuch † Bagoas, who put the crown upon the head of Arses, his youngest son; but, in a short time, dispatched him likewise, and made Codomannus ^c (one of the same family, but at some distance, and who, upon his accession, took the name of *Darius*) king of Persia.

Upon the
death of Ar-
taxerxes
Mνησαν,
Darius Co-
domannus
is made
king of
Persia, and
vanquished
by Alexan-
der the
Great.

In the third year of the reign of Ochus, about 356 years before the birth of Christ, Alexander the Great, who overthrew the Persian empire, was born at Pella in Macedonia. His father Philip had been chosen captain-general of all Greece, (which, at this time, made a very considerable figure in history), for carrying on the war against Persia; but when he was just ready to set forward upon that expedition † he was slain at home, while he

* Artaxerxes, when he died, left three sons, Ariaspes, Ochus, and Arsames; Ariaspes was an easy credulous prince; and therefore Ochus so terrified him with menaces, which he pretended came from his father, that, for fear of being put to death, he poisoned himself. Arsames he caused to be assassinated by Harpates; and this loss, added to the other, so overwhelmed the old king with grief, that he broke his heart and died; *Prideaux's Connection anno 359.*

^b Diodorus Siculus, lib. 17.

† This eunuch having poisoned both Ochus and his son Arses, set the crown upon Darius's head; but, finding that he would not answer his purpose, in permitting him to govern all in his name, (which was the thing he aimed at in his advancement), he was resolved to have removed him, in the same manner as he had done his predecessors; and accordingly had provided a poisonous potion for him. But Darius, being advised of the design, when the potion was brought to him, made him drink it all himself, and so got rid of the traitor by his own artifice; *Prideaux's Connection, anno 335.*

^c Diodorus Siculus, lib. 17.

‡ The occasion of his death is said to be this:—Pausanias, a young noble Macedonian, and one of his guards, having had his body forced, and sodomitically abused by Attalus the chief of the king's confidants, had often complained to Philip of the injury; but, finding no redress he turned his revenge from the author of the injury upon him who refused to do him justice for it, and slew him as he was passing in great state to the theatre, having the images of the twelve gods and goddesses, and his own in the same pompous habit, carried before him. Here-
by

was celebrating the marriage of Cleopatra his daughter with Alexander king of Epirus. A. M. 3596, &c. Ant. Chris. 408, &c.

Upon his death, Alexander his son succeeded him in the kingdom of Macedon, when he was twenty years old; and, ^d having been chosen (as his father was) to command the Grecian forces against Persia, he took the field, and, in one campaign only, over-ran almost all Asia Minor; vanquished Darius in two pitched battles; took his mother, wife, and children, prisoners; and, having subdued all Syria, came to Tyre; but there he met with a stop: For the Tyrians *, (in confidence of the strength of the place, and of assistance from their allies,) when he would have entered the city, denied him admittance. from 1 Macc. i. to vi. 7.; 2 Macc. iii. to x. and from Jos. Hist. lib. 11. c. 7. to lib. 12. c. 14.

While his army was besieging Tyre, he sent out his commissioners, requiring the inhabitants of the neighbouring countries, viz. of Galilee, Samaria, and Judea, to submit to him, and to furnish him with what he wanted. Other provinces complied; but the Jews pleading their oath to Darius, by which they thought themselves bound not to acknowledge any new master so long as he was alive, refused to obey his commands. This exasperated the

Who marches against Jerusalem in great anger, but shews the high-priest and all the people much respect when he came thither.

by he arrogated to himself the honour of a god; but being slain as soon as his image entered the theatre, he gave a signal proof that he was no more than a mere mortal man; Justin, lib. 9.; Diodor. Sicul, lib. 16.

^d Justin, lib. 11. c. 2.

* The city of Tyre is probably supposed to have been first built by a colony of the Sidonians, and therefore the prophet Isaiah, chap. xxxiii. 12. calls it *the daughter of Zidon*. It was at first situated on the high hill on the continent, whose ruins are still remaining under the name of *Palatyrus*, or *Old Tyre*; but, in process of time, it was removed into an adjacent rocky island, about half a mile from the main land, and became a place of so great trade and wealth, that, according to the fore-mentioned prophet, *her merchants were princes, and her traffickers the honourable of the earth*, ver. 8. It had once been taken and destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar; but when Alexander came before it, it had quite recovered itself, and was fortified with a strong wall (drawn round it on the brink of the sea) of an hundred and fifty feet in height; so that he had no way of approaching it, in order to make an assault, but by carrying a bank from the continent, through the sea, to the island on which the city stood, which in seven months time he accomplished, and at length took the place; *Prideaux's Connection*,

anno 333.

A. M.
3596, &c
Ant. Chrii
403, &c.
from !

Macc. i. to

vi. 7 ; 2

Macc. iii. to

x and from

Jos. Hist.

lib. 11. c. 7.

to lib. 12.

c. 14.

the conqueror not a little ; who, * in the flush of his many successes, could bear no contradiction ; and therefore, as soon as he had done with Tyre †, he marched directly against Jerusalem.

Jaddua

* No sooner was he chosen general of all the Grecian cities confederated against the Persian empire, but he subdued the Tyrians and Triballians in Thrace ; and, upon his return, took Thebes, that had revolted from the confederacy, and razed it to the ground. After this, setting out upon the Persian expedition, he vanquished Darius near the Granicus ; and, after the action, took Sardis, Ephesus, Miletum, and Halicarnassus. the next year he made himself master of all Phrygia, Lycia, Pamphylia, Pisidia, Paphlagonia, and Cappadocia. The next year he gave Darius a second defeat (and a terrible one it was) at Issus ; took his mother, wife, two daughters, and a young son, prisoners ; seized Damascus, and, in it, immense riches : subdued, in short, all Syria, Cælo-Syria, and Phœnicia : For every place yielded to him, none pretending to make any resistance till he came to Tyre ; *Prideaux's Connection, anno 333.*

† As soon as he had taken the town, he burnt it down to the ground, and destroyed and enslaved all the inhabitants. Eight thousand he slew in the sackage of the town, and two thousand of those whom he took prisoners he caused to be crucified ; a piece of cruelty this, highly unbecoming a generous conqueror. But, to palliate the matter, he gave out, that it was done by way of just revenge upon them, for their murdering their masters, and that, being originally but slaves, crucifixion was the proper punishment for them. But this depended upon an old story. Some ages before, the slaves of Tyre, having made a conspiracy against their masters, murdered them all in one night, (except only Strato, whom his slave secretly saved,) and having married their mistresses, continued masters of the town, and from them the present Tyrians were descended. So that Alexander pretended, on this occasion, to revenge on them the murder that was committed by their progenitors so many ages before ; though, in reality, it was to gratify his rage, for being so long detained before the place, and there so valiantly resisted. Recovering, however, its beauty and riches again, it was invested with the privileges of a Roman city, for its fidelity, and, in the flourishing times of Christianity, was the metropolitan see of the province of Phœnicia : But now, that it is fallen into the hands of the Turks, there is not the least similitude of that glory for which it was once renowned. Its present inhabitants are only a few poor wretches, harbouring themselves in vaults, (for there is not one entire house left,) subsisting chiefly upon fishing, and preserved in this place as it were by providence, for a visible argument of God's having fulfilled

^c Jaddua the high-priest, who, at this time, had the chief government of the Jews, under the king of Persia, was in dreadful apprehensions of what the event might prove: but having no protection to depend on but God's, he, and all Jerusalem with him, made their cries and supplications to him, imploring his mercy for their deliverance from the approaching storm; whereupon he was ordered, in a vision of the night, to go out, and meet Alexander (whenever he should come) in his pontifical robes, with the priests attending him in their proper habits, and all the people in white garments.

A. M.
3595 &c.
Ant. Chriſt.
48, &c.
from 1
Macc. i. to
vi. 7.; 2
Macc. iii. to
x and from
Joſ. Hift.
lib. ii. c. 7,
lib. 12.
c. 14.

Jaddua, next day, with the priests and people, habited in the manner directed, went out of the city to a certain eminence, which commanded the prospect of all the country round, and there waited the coming of Alexander. As soon as the high-priest saw him at some distance, he moved towards him in this solemn pomp; which struck the king with such an awe, that as he drew near, he bowed down to him, and saluted him with a religious veneration, to the great surprise of all that attended him.

While every one stood amazed at this behaviour, Parmenio, his first favourite, took the freedom to ask him, how it came to pass, that he whom all mankind adored, paid such adoration to the Jewish high-priest? To which his reply was, "That he did not pay that adoration to him, but to the God whose high-priest he was; that while he was at Dio in Macedonia, and deliberating with himself how to carry on the war with Persia, that very person, and in that very habit, appeared to him in a dream, encouraging him to pass boldly over into Asia, and not to doubt of success, because God would be his guide in the expedition, and give him the empire of the Persians; and that therefore, from hence he was assured, that he made the present war under the conduct of that God, to whom, in the person of this high-priest, he paid adoration." And hereupon, turning to Jaddua again, he embraced him very kindly: And so, going into the city with him, offered sacrifices to God in the temple, where the high-

B 2

priest

fulfilled his word concerning Tyre, viz. *That it should be as the top of a rock, a place for fishers to dry their nets on*, Ezek. xxvi. 14.; Justin. lib. 18. c. 3. Prideaux's Connection. anno 333; and Maundrell's Journey from Aleppo to Jerusalem.

^c Joseph. lib. 11. c. 8.

A. M.
3596, &c.
Ant. Chris.
408, &c.
from 1
Macc. i. to
vi. 7. i. 2
Macc. iii. to
x and from
Jos. Hist.
lib. xi. c. 7.
to lib. 12.
c. 14.

priest shewed him the prophecies of Daniel *, predicting the overthrow of the Persian empire by a Grecian king, which he applied to himself, and thereby confirmed his opinion, that God had chosen him to execute this great work. When he left Jerusalem, he offered to grant the people whatever immunities the high-priest should desire; but he requested no more than a toleration to live according to their own laws and religion, and an exemption from the payment of tribute every seventh year, because on the sabbatical year, the Jews were forbidden to till their ground. This he readily consented to, and having signified his pleasure, that if any of them were minded to list in his troops, he would readily receive them, great multitudes did hereupon offer their service, and followed him in his other expeditions.

But he excuses himself to the Samaritans, and is highly incensed against them for the murder of Andromachus

† No sooner was he well got out of the city, but the Samaritans met him in great pomp and parade, desiring of him, that he would likewise honour their city and temple with his presence. “He was then hastening to Egypt, (he told them,) but that when he returned, if his affairs would permit him, he would not fail to comply with their desires.” And when they requested of him an immunity from all taxes every seventh year, because they (as well as the Jews) did every seventh year suffer their land to lie fallow, he asked them if they were Jews, because to them only he had granted that privilege. Their answer was, that they were Hebrews, but that the Phœnicians called them *Sichemites*: Whereupon, having no leisure to make any farther inquiry into the matter, he referred this likewise to his return, when he promised to examine into their pretensions, and to do them justice; but before his return, they had done enough to incense him against them.

On his going from these parts into Egypt, he had made Andromachus, a special favourite of his, governor of Syria and Palestine; who ‡ coming to Samaria, in order to settle some affairs, was burnt to death in his house, which

* *Viz.* What is written of the ram and the he-goat, chap. viii. where that he-goat is interpreted to be the king of Grecia, who should conquer the Medes and Persians, ver. 20. As likewise what is written by the same prophet, of the same Grecian king, chap. xi. 3.; for both these prophecies foretold the destruction of the Persian king; *Prideaux's Connection, anno 333.*

† Joseph. lib. 11. c. 8. ‡ Quint. Curt. lib. 4. c. 8.

which the people set on fire, out of rage and discontent, very probably, that the privileges, which were granted to their enemies the Jews, were denied to them. This barbarous action exasperated Alexander not a little; insomuch that having caused those who had acted any part in the murder of the governor to be put to death, he drove all the rest of the inhabitants out of Samaria, planted therein a colony of Macedonians, and gave the rest of their territories to the Jews.

After the death of Alexander *, (who did not long

survive

* It is not well agreed among historians, how this great conqueror of the world died. Some of them are of opinion, that he was poisoned by the procurement of Antipater, whom he had left governor of all his dominions in his absence, and who, for his mal-administration, had been lately dismissed: and therefore fearing to be called to an account, did, by the hands of his sons, who were about the person of the king, and one of them his cup-bearer, execute this treason upon his master's life, in order to save his own: But in the judgement of other historians, he died by nothing but excessive drinking; and thus they relate the story. 'One day after he had been sacrificing to the gods for the many victories which he had obtained, he made an entertainment for his friends, wherein he drank very hard, and continued the debauch till late at night; when returning from the feast, he and his company were invited by a physician of Thessalia, to come and drink a little more at his house. Alexander accepted of the offer: And as there were twenty in company, he first drunk to each of them in their order, and so pledged them again, and then called for the Herculean cup. There was in company one Prodeas, a Macedonian, but a terrible drinker, and to him the king drank this Herculean brim-full, (which they tell us held six of our quarts), and not long after, pledged him in the same; but immediately after the second cup, he dropped down upon the place, and then fell into a violent fever, of which he died, in the thirty-third year of his age, after a reign of twelve years, six years as king of Macedon, and six more as monarch of Asia.' He was a man of a bold enterprising spirit, but fuller of fire than discretion. His actions, though they were attended with success, were carried on with a furious and extravagant rashness; and the few virtues that he had were obscured with much greater vices. Vain glory was the predominant passion of his soul; and the fables of the ancient Greek heroes, the only charts by which he steered his conduct. This was the reason that he dragged Betis round the walls of Gaza, in the same manner as Achilles had used Hector; that he undertook that hazardous expedition into India, as Hercules

A. M.
3596, &c.
Ant. Chris.
408, &c.
from 1
Macc. i. to
vi. 7.; 2
Macc. iii. to
x. and from
Jof. Hist.
lib. 11. c. 7.
to lib. 12.
c. 14.

Upon Alexander's death, his commanders divide the empire among them.

A. M. 3596, &c. Ant. Chrif. 408, &c. from 1 Macc. i. to vi. 7; 2 Macc. iii. to x. and from

furvive the unfortunate Darius *), the Grecian or Macedonian empire (for fo it was now become) was divided among the chief commanders of is army, who soon fell to leaguings and fighting againft each other, till after some years, they were all destroyed, except four, and thefe agreed to make a partition of the whole among themfelves,

Jof. Hift. lib. 11 c. 7. to lib. 11. c. 14.

les had done before him; that he made a drunken proceffion through Caramania, becaufe Bacchus is faid to have done the like in the fame place; and that he affected to be called the fon of

Jupiter, becaufe moft of the ancient heroes pretended, that they had for their fathers one god or other. The truth is, this young conqueror, having the Iliads of Homer in great admiration, always carried them with him laid them under his pillow when he fleep, and read in them on all leifure opportunities: and therefore finding Achilles to be the great hero in that poem, he thought every thing faid of him worthy of imitation, and the readieft way to become an hero himfelf, which was the main impulfive caufe of all his undertakings: But in reality, were aétions to be duly eftimated, he could deserve no other character than that of the great cut-throat of the age in which he lived. The folly of mankind however, and the error of hiftorians is fuch, that they ufually make the aétions of war, bloodfhed, and conqueft, the fubjects of their higheft encomiums, and thofe their moft celebrated heroes that moft excel in thefe; whereas thofe only are the true heroes, who moft benefit the world, by promoting the peace and welfare of mankind. In a righteous caufe indeed, and the juft defence of a man's country, all aétions of valour are juft reafons of praife; but in all other cafes, victory and conqueft are no more than murder and rapine, and thofe who thus opprefs the world with the flaughter of men, the defolation of countries, the burning of cities, and the other calamities which attend war, are the fcourges of God, the Attilas of the age in which they live, and the greateft plagues and calamities that happen to it; and therefore to make thefe the fubject of praife and panegyric, is to lay ill examples before princes, as if fuch oppreffions of mankind were the trueft ways to honour and glory; *Diod. Sic. lib. 17.; Arrian, lib. 7.; Juftin, lib. 12.; 2. Curt. lib 10.; Plutarch in Alexandro; and Prideaux's Connection, anno 328. and 332.*

* After the battle of Arbela, wherein he was fore difcomfited, he made his efcape into Media, and having got fome few forces, together, thought to have tried his fate in one battle more; when Bessus, his governor of Baétria, and Nabazanes, another Perfian nobleman, confpired together, and having feized the poor king, and made him their prifoner, put him in chains, and fhut him up in a clofe cart, and fo carried him with them towards Baétria, intending, if Alexander purfued them to purchafe their peace by delivering him up into his hands; but if

he

and so cantoned it into four kingdoms, though all this while Aridæus *, a bastard brother of Alexander's, that took upon him the name of Philip, and after him Alexander Ægus, his own son by his wife Roxana, bore both of them the title of kings.

In this division, Ptolemy, the son of Lagus, whom the Greeks call *Soter*, having taken possession of Egypt, thought that the provinces of Syria, Phœnicia, and Judea, would be an excellent barrier for him; and therefore ^h he first of all attempted to bribe Laomedon, a Mitylenian captain of Alexander's, (who after the death of Andromachus very probably was made governor of Syria, and the adjacent countries,) with a vast sum of money, to deliver them up into his hands: But not being able to prevail this way, he sent Nicanor, one of his captains, with an army into Syria, whilst himself, with a fleet, invaded Phœnicia; and so having vanquished Laomedon, and taken him prisoner, he made himself master of all these provinces.

The Jews however, for some time, stood out against him, and upon account of the oath they had taken to the deposed governor, refused to submit to his authority. Hereupon he marched into Judea, and, having got possession of most of the country, laid siege to Jerusalem,

he did not, to kill him. and seize his kingdom, and so renew the war. Alexander having heard what these traitors had done, made all the haste he could to rescue Darius out of their hands; but when, after several days march, he came up with them, (because Darius refused to mount on horseback, for his more speedy flight with them,) they gave him several mortal wounds, and left him dying in the cart. He was dead before Alexander came; but when he saw his corps. he could not forbear shedding tears at so melancholy a spectacle: And having cast his cloak over it, he ordered that it should be wrapped up therein. and carried to his mother Sisygambis, at Shushan, (where he had left her with the other captive ladies,) to be buried there with a royal funeral (for which himself allowed the expence) in the sepulchres of the kings of Persia; *Prideaux's Connection, anno 330.*

* Aridæus, with his wife Euridice, was put to death by Olympias, the mother of Alexander the Great, after he had borne the title of king for six years and seven months; and Alexander Ægus, with his mother Roxana, after a long imprisonment in the castle of Amphipolis, was, in like manner. murdered by Cassander, to make way for himself to the crown of Macedon.

^h Diod. Sic. lib. 18.; Plutarch, in Demetrio. ⁱ Jewish Antiq. l. 12. c. 1.

A. M.
3596, &c..
Ant. Chris.
408, &c.
from 1
Macc. i, to
vi. 7.; 2
Macc. iii, to
x and from
Jes. Hist.
lib. i. c. 7.
to lib. 12.
c. 14.
Ptolemy
Soter takes
possession
of Egypt,
and sub-
dues Pal-
estine.

A. M. 3596, &c. Ant. Chriſt. 408, &c. from 1 Macc. iii. to vi. 7.; 2 Macc. iii. to x. and from Joſ. Hiſt. lib. ii. c. 7. to lib. i. c. 14.

falem. The place was ſtrong enough, both by nature and art, to have made a conſiderable defence againſt him; but the Jews had then ſuch a ſuperſtitious notion for the obſervation of the Sabbath, that they thought it a breach of their law, even to defend themſelves on it: Which when Ptolemy underſtood, he made choice of that day to ſtorm the place, and in the aſſault took it, becauſe there were none that would defend the walls againſt him. At firſt he dealt hardly with the inhabitants, and carried above an hundred thouſand of them captives into Egypt; but afterwards conſidering how faithful they had been to their former governors, he employed them in his army and garriſons, and granted them large immunities and privileges; whereupon the whole nation of the Jews became ſubject to the power and dominion of the kings of Egypt.

Simon the Juſt made high-prieſt and completes the canon of Scripture.

In the fifth year of this Ptolemy's reign, Onias, the Jewish high-prieſt, died, and was ſucceeded by Simon his ſon, who from the holineſs of his life, and the great righteouſneſs which ſhone forth in all his actions, was called *Simon the Juſt*. He continued in his office for nine years, in which time he did many beneficial acts * both for the church and ſtate of the Jews; but what is chiefly commemorated of him, is his completing the canon of the Scriptures of the Old Teſtament. What Ezra ^k, and the men of the great ſynagogue, who (as ſome ſay) aſſiſted him, did in this work, we have taken ſufficient notice of before. The books of Ezra, Nehemiah, Eſther, and Malachi, as well as the two Chronicles of the kings of Judah and

* The commendation which the author of Eccleſiaſticus gives of this high-prieſt, is thus expreſſed:—*He, in his life-time, repaired the houſe again, and in his days fortified the temple. By him was built, from the foundation, the double height, the high ſtreſs of the wall above the temple. In his days, the ciſtern to receive water, being in compaſs as the ſea, was covered with plates of braſs. He took care of the temple that it ſhould not fall, and fortified the city againſt beſieging. How was he honoured amidſt the people, in his coming out of the ſanctuary? He was as the morning-ſtar in the miſt of a cloud, and as the moon at the full, or the ſun ſhining upon the temple of the Moſt High, and as a rainbow giving light in the bright clouds:—When he put on the robe of honour, and was clothed with the perfection of glory, and when he went up to the holy altar, he made the garments of holineſs honourable; Eccluſ. i. 1, 2. &c.*

^k Prideaux's Connection, anno 292.

and Israel, could not possibly be inserted by Ezra himself, because some of these books claim him for their author, and in others there are some particulars which refer to times as low as Alexander the Great, and therefore a later time must be assigned for their reception into the canon. And if so, there seems to be none so proper as that when the men of the great synagogue, who, under the direction and presidency of Simon the Just, were employed in this work, ceased to be.

Simon was succeeded in the pontificate by his brother Eleazer, (for his son Onias was but a minor when he died); and, upon the death of Ptolemy Soter, his son Ptolemy Philadelphus succeeded in the throne of Egypt, and pursued his father's example in continuing the museum *, or college of learned men, which he had erected, and in augmenting the noble library † which he had left behind him at Alexandria. To this purpose, hearing that

A. M.
3596, &c.
Ant. Chris.
408, &c.
from 1
Macc. i. to
vi. 7; 2
Macc. iii. to
x and from
Jof. Hist.
lib. 11. c. 7.
to lib. 12.
c. 14.

Ptolemy
Philadel-
phus's Mu-
seum and
library at
Alexandria.

* This was a large edifice in Alexandria, which stood in that quarter of the city called *Brachium*, and was designed for the habitation of such learned men as made it their study to improve philosophy, and all useful knowledge, like that of the Royal Society at London, and the Royal Academy of Sciences at Paris. This building, which was not far distant from the palace, was surrounded with a portico or piazza, where the philosophers walked and conversed, and had in it a common hall, where they used to eat together. The members of this society were under the government of a president whose office was of that consideration and dignity, that, during the reign of the Ptolemies, he was always constituted by those kings, and afterwards by the Roman emperors. The revenues appointed for the maintenance of this college, from the first foundation of it, were large. From it did proceed men of very excellent literature; and to it was owing, that Alexandria, for a great many ages together, was the greatest school of learning in all those parts of the world; until, in the war which the Alexandrians had with Aurelian the Roman emperor, all that quarter of the city where the museum stood was destroyed, and with it this college of learned men dissolved; *Pri-
deaux's Connection. anno 285.*

† This library was at first placed in the Museum; but, when it was filled with books to the number of four hundred thousand volumes, there was another library erected within the Serapeum, (or the famous temple where the image of Serapis was set up,) which increased in time to the number of three hundred thousand volumes, and these two put together made up the number of seven hundred thousand volumes in the whole, of which the royal libraries of the Ptolemean kings at Alexan-

A. M.
3596, &c.
Ant. Christ
408, &c.
from 1
Macc. i. to
vi. 7; 2
Macc. iii. to
x. and from
Jof. Hist.
lib. 11 c. 7
to lib. 12.
c. 14.

the Jews had among them a famous book, viz. The book of their law, which well deserved a place among his collection, he sent to Eleazar * the high-priest, to desire an authentic copy of it: And, because it was wrote in a language that he did not understand, he desired him, at the same time, to send a competent number of learned men,

dria are said to consist. Their manner of collecting them was not so very honourable; for whatever books were brought by any foreigner into Egypt, these they seized, and sending them to the Musæum, (where they maintained people for that purpose), they caused them to be transcribed, and then sent the copies to the owners, but laid up the originals in the library. When Julius Cæsar waged war with the Alexandrians, it so happened, that the library in the Brachium was burnt, and the four hundred thousand volumes that were laid up there were all consumed. But that of the Serapeum still remained, and soon grew to be larger, and of more eminent note than the former; but at length, in the year of our Lord 642, when the Saracens made themselves masters of the city, they totally destroyed it. For, when the general of the army wrote to Omar, who was then the caliph or emperor of the Saracens, to know his pleasure concerning it, his answer was, 'That if these books contained what was agreeing with the Alcoran, there was no need of them, because the Alcoran alone was sufficient for all truth; but if they contained what was disagreeing with it, they were not to be endured:' And therefore he ordered, that whatsoever the contents of them were, they should all be destroyed; *Prideaux's Connection* anno 285.

* Josephus hath given us both Ptolemy's letter to Eleazar, and Eleazar's answer at large: but whether these pieces are genuine or no, is a matter of some dispute among the learned. They are too long, however, to be here inserted; but the substance of the letter is,——'That both Ptolemy and his father had been extremely kind to the Jews; his father, in placing them in offices of trust; and himself, in redeeming great numbers of them from slavery, and employing several of them both in his court and camp; and that, as a farther testimony of his kindness to them, he proposed to make a translation of their law into the Greek language, for which he desired them to send a proper number of such men as he knew were qualified for the undertaking.' In answer to which, Eleazar acknowledges the receipt of his most gracious letter, and of the valuable presents which he had sent; and, in return, promises, that the people should not fail to pray to God daily for the protection of his person, and the prosperity of his royal family; and that, pursuant to his commands, he had sent an authentic copy of the law, and six men out of each tribe to assist in the translation of it; *Jewish Hist.* lib. 12. c. 2.

men, well-versed in both the Hebrew and Greek tongues, who, out of the former, might translate it for him into the latter. This Eleazar failed not to do; and, from the joint labours of the LXX or rather LXXII translators, that were employed in the work, the version has ever since gone under the name of the *Septuagint*: But of this piece of history we have already had occasion to say what we thought sufficient, towards the conclusion of our * apparatus.

After the death of Ptolemy Philadelphus, † his son Euergetes came to the crown of Egypt, and Onias succeeded his uncle (though not immediately) in the pontificate. He was the son of Simon the Just; but, in many things, the very reverse to his father. At the best he was but a weak and inconsiderate man; ¹ but being now grown very old,

C 2

* Those who would see more at large what are the opinions of learned men concerning the Septuagint, and the account which Ariſtæas gives of the manner in which it was done, may consult the critics who have expressly handled this matter, such as Scaliger, Usher, Walton, Fraſſen, Dupin, Valdal, Hody, Calmer, Whiſton, and Prideaux in his *Connection*, anno 277.

† After the death of his beloved wife Arsinoe, Ptolemy did not long survive her: For, being of a tender constitution himself, and having farther weakened it by a luxurious indulgence, he could not bear the approach of age, or the grief of mind which he fell under upon this occasion; but, sinking under these burdens, he died, in the sixty-third year of his life, after he had reigned in Egypt 38 years. As he was a learned prince himself, and a great patron of learning, many of those who were eminent for any part of literature resorted to him from all parts, and partook of his favour and bounty. Seven celebrated poets of that age are said to have lived at his court; four of which, viz. Theocritus, Callimachus, Lycophron, and Aratus, have their works still remaining; and, among these, the first of them has a whole Idyllium, and the second, part of two hymns, written in his praise. Manetho, the Egyptian historian, dedicated his history to him; and Zoilus the snarling critic, came also to his court. But how great soever his wit was, he could never recommend himself to King Ptolemy, who hated him for the bitterness and ill-nature of it: And, for the same reason, having drawn on himself the odium and aversion of all men, he at length died miserably; for some say, that he was stoned; others, that he was burnt to death; and others again that he was crucified by King Ptolemy, for a crime that deserved that punishment; *Prideaux's Connection*, anno 249.

¹ Jewish Antiq. lib. 12. c. 3.

A. M.
3596, &c.
Ant. Chris.
408, &c.
from 1
Macc. i. to
vi. 7.; 2
Macc. iii. to
x, and from
Jof. Hist.
lib. 11. c. 7.
to lib. 12.
c. 14.

Onias the
high-
priest's
great neg-
lect of pu-
blic affairs,

A. M. 3596. &c. old, and very covetous, he took no care to pay Ptolemy
 Ant. Christ. Euergetes the annual tribute of twenty talents, which his
 408. &c. predecessors used to do; so that, when the arrears were
 from 1 swelled to a large sum, the king sent one Athenion, an of-
 Macc. i. to ficer of his court, to Jerusalem, to demand the full pay-
 vi. 7; 2 ment of the money, upon peril of having an army sent a-
 Macc. iii. to mong them to dispossess them of their country.

Jof. Hist. ^m Onias had a nephew by his sister's side, whose name
 lib. 11. c. 7. was *Joseph*, a young man of great reputation among the
 to lib. 2. Jews, for prudence, justice, and sanctity of life. He, as
 c. 14. soon as he heard of the message, which Athenion had
 brought, and of the people's great consternation thereupon,
 went immediately to his uncle, and severely upbraided him
 with his ill management of the public interest, who, for
 the lucre of a little money, had exposed the whole nation
 to such imminent danger, which now there was no way to
 avoid, (as he told him,) but by his going immediately to
 the Egyptian court, and, by a timely application to the
 king there, endeavouring to pacify his wrath.

Joseph his
 nephew
 sent to re-
 dress it at
 the Egypti-
 an court.

The bare mentioning of a journey to Alexandria * so
 terrified the high-priest, that (upon his declaring, that he
 would

^m Jewish Antiq. lib. 12. c. 4.

* This city, which was built by Alexander the Great, A.
 M. 3673, was, after his death, made the capital of Egypt, by
 Ptolemy and his successors, for almost three hundred years.
 Dinocrates (who rebuilt the temple of Diana at Ephesus, after
 it had been burnt by Erostratus) was the architect who drew
 the plan of it, and had the chief direction of the work; but,
 to have it carried on with more expedition. Alexander ap-
 pointed Cleomenes, one of his captains, to be the surveyor of
 it; and for this reason, Justin, lib. 13. c. 4. calls him the foun-
 der of it. The happy situation of this city between the Me-
 diterranean and the Red-sea, and upon the river Nile, drew
 thither the commerce of the east and west, and made it in a
 very little time one of the most flourishing cities in the world.
 It has still some small repute for merchandize; but what
 has occasioned the decay of its trade, is the discovery of
 the passage to the East Indies by the Cape of Good Hope, or
 on the south of Afric. Before this discovery, the whole spice-
 trade was carried into this part of the world through this city;
 for the spices were brought from the East Indies, up the Red-
 sea, to Egypt, and from thence were carried by land on camels
 to Alexandria. When Egypt became a province of the Roman
 empire, this city continued the metropolis of it: and when the
 Arabians took it, (which was about 640 years after Christ,)
 there

would quite his station both in church and state, rather than undertake it) Joseph offered, with his permission, and the peoples approbation, to go in his stead. In the mean time he took care to entertain Athenion at his own house, as long as he continued in Jerusalem, in a very splendid and magnificent manner: When he departed, he presented him with several very valuable gifts; and so sent him away in a good disposition, to make as favourable a representation to the king as the case would bear, until himself should come to the Egyptian court, in order to give him a full satisfaction.

A. M.
3596, &c.
Ant. Christ.
408, &c.
1. 0. 5. 1
Macc. i. to
7. 3. 2
Macc. iii. to
x and from
Jof. Hist.
lib. 11. c. 7.
to lib. 12.
c. 14.

Athenion was so taken with this prudent behaviour, and kind entertainment of Joseph, that when he came to give the king a report of his embassy, he could not but mention his name with pleasure; and when he told him of his intentions to come and wait upon him himself, he set forth his character with so much advantage, that the king expressed a desire to see him. In a short time, Joseph set out for Alexandria; and, falling in, upon the road, with several of the chief nobility of Cælo-Syria and Phœnicia, whose business at court was to farm the royal revenues of these provinces, he joined company with them, and having learned from their discourse of what value these revenues were, he made use of that intelligence afterwards, both to his own and the king's advantage.

When they all arrived at Alexandria, the king was gone to Memphis †; so that Joseph made haste thither, and had

there were four thousand palaces still standing in it, four thousand bagnios, forty thousand Jews paying tribute, four hundred squares, and twelve thousand persons, that sold herbs and fruit. Here, as we said, was the famous Serapeum, or temple of Serapis, for beauty of workmanship and magnificence of structure, inferior to nothing but the Roman capitol. Here was the museum, or college of philosophers; and here that noble library, which was erected by Ptolemy Philadelphus, but unhappily burnt in the war between Cæsar and Pompey. But notwithstanding all its former splendor and magnificence, this city is now become a poor village, (by the Egyptians called *Rachot*,) without any thing remarkable in it, except its ruins, and the remains of its former grandeur; only, without the city, Pompey's pillar (the shaft whereof is six fathoms high, all of one piece of curious granite) is justly admired as one of the finest columns that is any where to be seen; *Calmet's Dictionary*, under the word; and *Well's Geography of the New Testament*.

† This was a very famous city, and, till the time of the Ptolemies

A. M. 3596, &c.
Ant. Chris
408, &c.
from 1
Macc. i. to
v. 7; 2
Macc iii. to
x. and from
Jof. Hist.
lib. 12. c. 7.
to lib. 12.
c. 14.

had the good fortune to meet him, the queen, and Athenion, all in the same chariot, returning to Alexandria. The king, upon Athenion's signifying who he was, called him into the chariot; and having mentioned his uncle's ill usage, in not paying him his tribute, he was thereupon entertained with so handsome an apology for that neglect, from which he chiefly imputed to his uncle's old age, and other infirmities, that he not only satisfied the king, but gave him withal so good an opinion of the advocate, that, when they came to Alexandria, he ordered him to be lodged in the palace, and entertained at his expence.

He farms
the reve-
nues of Sy-
ria, Phœni-
cia, Judea,
and Sama-
ria, and sa-
tisfies his
uncle's ar-
rears.

When the day of farming out the revenues to the best bidder was come, the Syrian and Phœnician noblemen, with whom Joseph had travelled to Alexandria, beat down their price, and would give no more for all the duties of Coelo-Syria, Phœnicia, Judea, and Samaria, than eight thousand talents: But Joseph, having found fault with them for undervauling the king's revenues, offered to give twice as much, even exclusive of the forfeitures, which used before to belong to the farmers; and was thereupon admitted to be the king's receiver-general of all these provinces.

Upon the credit of this employment, he borrowed at Alexandria five hundred talents, wherewith he satisfied the

Jemies, who removed to Alexandria, the place of residence for the ancient kings of Egypt. It was situated above the parting of the river Nile, where the Delta begins. Towards the south of this city stood the famous pyramids, two of which were esteemed the wonders of the world; and, in this city, was fed the ox Apis, which Cambyfes slew in contempt of the Egyptians worshipping it as a god. The kings of Egypt took great pleasure in adorning this city; and in all its beauty it continued, till the Arabians made a conquest of Egypt under the Caliph Omar. The general, who took it, built another city just by it, which was called *Fusfat*, because his tent had been a long time set up in that place, and the Caliph's Fatamites, when they became masters of Egypt, added another to it, which is known to us at this day by the name of *Grand Cairo*. The Mameluck Sultans, of the dynasty of the Carcaffians, having afterwards built a strong fort on the eastern shore of the Nile, did, by degrees, annex a city to it, which came to be called the *New Cairo*, as what the Fatamites had built was called the *Old*; but it must be observed, that the ancient Memphis stood on the western shore of the Nile, whereas whatever the Arabians have there built, from time to time, is on the eastern shore of that river; *Calmet's Dictionary*, under the word.

the king for his uncle's arrears; and having received a guard of two thousand men to support him in the collection of the duties, he left Alexandria, and immediately entered upon it. In some places he met with opposition, and very opprobrious language; but having ordered the chief ringleaders to be seized, and exemplary justice to be executed upon them, he hereby so terrified the rest, that they readily paid him his demands without any molestation. And in this office he continued for the space of two and twenty years, under Ptolemy Euergetes, and Philopater his son, until Ptolemy Epiphanes, the son of Philopater lost these provinces to Antiochus the Great.

A. M.
3596, &c.
Ant. Chris.
408, &c.
from 1.
Macc. i. to
vi. 7.; 2.
Macc. iii. to
2 and from
Jof. Hist.
lib. 11, c. 7.
to lib. 12.
c. 14.

On the death of Ptolemy Euergetes, his son Philopater (not without some suspicion of having poisoned his father) succeeded to the throne; and, in the fifth year of his reign, having, at Raphia, a town not far from Gaza, defeated the army of Antiochus the Great, he afterwards visited the cities which by this victory he had regained, among which Jerusalem was one. Here he took a view of the temple, gave valuable donatives to it, and offered up many sacrifices to the God of Israel; but, not being content with this view from the outer court, (beyond which no Gentile was allowed to pass,) he was for going into the sanctuary, nay, even into the Holy of Holies itself, where no one but the high-priest (and that only on the great day of expiation) was allowed to enter. This made a great uproar all over the city. The high-priest informed him of the sacredness of the place, and of the law of God, which forbade his entrance. The priests and Levites were gathered together to hinder it. The people did earnestly deprecate it; and great lamentations were every where made, upon the apprehension of the approaching profanation of their holy temple. But all to no purpose. The king, the more he was opposed, the more resolute he was to have his will satisfied, and, accordingly, pressed into the inner court; but as he was passing farther to go into the temple, he was seized with such a sudden terror and consternation of mind, that he was carried out of the place, in a manner half dead, and, in a short time, departed from Jerusalem, highly incensed against the whole nation of the Jews, and venting many bitter threatenings against them.

Ptol. my
Philopater
endeavours
to enter in-
to the
temple, but
is prohibit-
ed.

His attempt
to destroy,
all the
Jews, but
their won-
derful e-
scape,

Nor was he forgetful to put his threats in execution. For no sooner was he returned to Alexandria, but he published a decree, and caused it to be engraven on a pillar erected at the gate of his palace, excluding every one who would

A. M.
3596, &c.
Ant. Chris.
408, &c.
from 1.
Macc. i. to
vi. 7.; 2.
Macc. iii. to
x. and from
Jof. Hist.
lib. 11. c. 7.
to lib. 12.
c. 14.

would not sacrifice to the God whom he worshipped, from having any access to him; degrading the Jews from the rights and privileges they had in the city; and ordering them all to come, and ^P be stigmatized with the mark of an ivy leaf (the badge of his god Bacchus) by an hot iron impressed upon them, and, as many us refused to come, commanding them to be put to death.

Nor did his rage end here: For, being determined to extirpate the whole Jewish nation, as many at least as were in his dominions, he sent out orders to his officers, requiring them to bring all the Jews who lived any where in Egypt, bound in chains to Alexandria; and having shut them up in the Hippodrome, (a large place, without the city, where the people used to assemble to see horse-races; and other shows,) he proposed the next day to make a spectacle of them, by having them destroyed by his * elephants. The elephants, to make them more furious, were intoxicated with wine, mingled with frankincense: But the king, the night before, having sitten up late at a drunken carousal, overslept himself, so that the show was put off till the day following; and, the next night, having done the same again, the show, for the same cause, was put off to the third day. All this while the Jews, continuing shut up in the Hippodrome, ceased not, with lifted up hands and voices, to pray unto God for their deliverance, which, accordingly, he vouchsafed them. For, on the third day, when the king was present, and the elephants were let loose, instead of falling upon the Jews, they turned all

^P 2 Maccab. vi. 7.

* In the books of the Maccabees, we find frequent mention made of elephants, because after the reign of Alexander the Great, these animals were very much employed in the armies, which the kings of Syria and Egypt raised. They were naturally of a very quiet and gentle disposition, and never made use of their strength, but when they were irritated, or compelled to it; and for this reason, we find that the elephants, which were in the army of Antiochus Eupater, had the blood of grapes and mulberries shewn them, thereby to animate them to the combat. 1 Maccab. vi. 34. as those, which here Ptolemy Philopater kept, were intoxicated with incense dipped in wine, to make them more mad and furious. When they are thus irritated and inflamed, their strength is prodigious, and nothing can stand before them. Every creature that comes in their way, they trample under foot, overthrow whole squadrons, knock down trees, and demolish houses; *Galsmet's Dictionary*, under the word.

all their rage upon those that came to see the show, and destroyed great numbers.

This wonderful interposal of providence, in the protection of these poor people, together with some strange appearances, at the same time seen in the air, so terrified the king, and all the spectators, that he ordered all the Jews to be set free; restored them to their former privileges; revoked every decree that had been made against them, and, among other favours, indulged them with his liberty, — Even to put to death all those Jews, who, in fear of persecution, had apostatised from their religion, which accordingly they put in rigorous execution.

Upon the death of * Ptolemy Philopater, his son Ptolemy Epiphanes (a child but of five years old) succeeded him in the throne: But Antiochus the Great, taking the advantage of the young king's inability to oppose him, marched an army into Cœlo-Syria and Palestine, and, in a very short time, made himself master of them. The Egyptians, however, under the command of Scapas their general, endeavoured to regain them, and had actually recovered Jerusalem into their possession; but, upon the approach of Antiochus in person, and the defeat which he gave them at Panéas, the Jews, who had been but badly used by Scapas, (a very covetous and rapacious man,) submitted to him very chearfully; and, receiving him and his army into the city, assisted him in the reduction of the castle, where Scapas had left a garrison. In acknowledgement of which services, he, by a public edict, granted them many favours, and, among the rest, a liberty to live according to their own laws and religion, and a power to prohibit any stranger to enter within the sept of the temple, alluding to the attempt which Philopater had lately made that way.

But

* This Ptolemy was a man entirely given up to his lusts and voluptuous delights. Drinking, gaming, and lasciviousness, were the whole employments of life. Agathoclea his concubine, and Agathocles her brother, who was his catamite, governed him absolutely; and when Arsinoe (who was both his sister and wife) complained of the neglect, which, by means of these two favourites, was put upon her, this so offended the king and his catamite, that orders were given to have her put to death. But he did not long survive her; for, having worn out a strong constitution by his intemperance and debaucheries, he ended his life before he had lived out half the course of it; *Prideaux's Connection, anno 204.*

A. M.
3596, &c.
Ant. Chris.
409, &c.
from 1
Macc. 1. to
vi. 7.; 2
Macc. iii. to
x. and from
Jos. Hist.
lib. 11. c. 7.
to lib. 12.
c. 14.

Palestine,
and Cœlo-
Syria over-
run by An-
tiochus the
Great, but
afterwards
returned to
Ptolemy
Epiphanes
in dower
with his
daughter
Cleopatra.

A M.
3596, &c.
Ant. Christ.
408, &c.
from 1
Macc. i. to
vi. 7; &
Macc. iii. to
x. and from
Jof. Hist.
Eb. 11. c. 7.
to lib. 12.
c. 14.

But Antiochus had greater things in view, than the subjection of a province or two; and therefore, to have his armies at liberty to engage the Romans †, who, since the defeat of Hannibal, in the second Punic war, were become justly formidable, made a peace with Ptolemy, and, giving him his daughter Cleopatra in marriage, with her he resigned the provinces of Cælo-Syria and Palestine, by way of dower.

By this means Judea reverted to the Egyptian crown, and Joseph, the nephew of Onias, the high-priest, was re-instituted in the office of collecting the king's revenues, in that and the neighbouring provinces. But, as Ptolemy, in a short time, had a son by Cleopatra, upon which occasion it was necessary for Joseph, among other great officers of state, to congratulate the king and queen, and to make them such presents as were usual, he, being now too old to take such a journey, and his other sons refusing to go, was obliged to send Hyrcanus, who was the youngest, but the best qualified for such a negociation, to make his compliment in his stead. But the history of the young man's birth is somewhat remarkable.

The birth
of Hyrcanus,
and his
perfidy at
Alexandria.

As Joseph's occasions, in his less advanced years, called him frequently to Alexandria; one night while he was at supper with the king, † he fell desperately in love with a beautiful damsel, that danced before him; and, not being able to master his inordinate passion, he communicated it to his brother Salimius, (who had accompanied him in his journey, and carried with him a daughter of his, with an intent to marry her at Alexandria,) and desired of him, if possible, to procure him the enjoyment of her; but, as secretly as he could, because of the sin and shame that would attend such an act. Salimius promised that he would: But instead of that, he conveyed his own daughter into his bed, and, the next morning, as secretly conveyed her away, so that his brother never discovered the deceit. In this manner Joseph accompanied with her several nights; till,

† It was by Hannibal's instigation that he entered upon this war, wherein he was far from having the success which he expected. Two years he took up in preparations for it, and had got together an army consisting of seventy thousand foot, twelve thousand horse, and fifty-four elephants; but the Romans, with less than half the number, met him near Magnesia, under mount Sipylus, and there gave him a total overthrow.

^a Jewish Antiq. lib. 12. c. 4,

[†] Ibid.

till, every time growing more and more enamoured, he made his complaint one day to his brother, of his hard fate, who, by the laws of his religion, was forbidden to marry the woman that he loved, because she was an alien: Whereupon the other discovered the whole matter to him, and how, instead of the admired dancer, he had put his daughter to bed to him, as thinking it more eligible to wrong his own child, than to suffer him to join himself to a strange woman, which their law expressly forbade. The surprisingness of this discovery, and the singular instance of his brother's kindness, so wrought upon Joseph's heart, that he immediately made the young woman his wife †, and of her, the next year, was born this Hyrcanus.

A. M.
3596, &c.
Ant. Chris.
408, &c.
from 1.
Macc. i. to
vi. 7; 2.
Macc iii. to
x. and from
Jof. Hif.
lib. i. c. 7.
to lib. 12.
c. 14.

Hyrcanus, when he undertook the journey to Alexandria, persuading his father not to send his presents from Judea, but to purchase them rather at Alexandria, obtained, by this means, an unlimited credit upon his agent in that city: And therefore, when he came thither, instead of ten talents, (as might be expected,) he demanded a thousand, which in our money amounts to above two hundred thousand pounds.

With this money he bought an hundred beautiful boys for the king, and an hundred beautiful young maids for the queen, at the price of a talent a head; and when he presented them, they carried each a talent in their hands, the boys for the king, and the young maids for the queen; so that this article alone cost him four hundred talents. The rest he expended all in valuable gifts to the courtiers, and great officers about the king, except what he kept for his own private use.

By these means growing highly in favour with the king, queen, and all the court, he made use of his in-
D 2

He is ha-
ted, and
banished
by his bro-
thers and
country-
men, and
forced at
last to kill
himself.

terest

† According to the Jewish law, an uncle might marry his niece, though an aunt (Levit. xviii. 12, 13. and xx. 19.) might not marry her nephew, for which the Jewish writers assign this reason:—That the aunt being in respect of the nephew, in the same degree with the father or mother, in the line of descent, hath naturally a superiority over him; and therefore for him to make her his wife, and thereby to bring her down to be in a degree below him, (as all wives in respect of their husbands are,) would be to disturb and invert the order of nature, but that there is no such thing done, when the uncle married the niece, in which case, both keep the same degree and order that they were in before, without the least mutation; *Pré-
de aux's Connection, anno 187.*

A. M.
3596, &c.
Ant. chrif.
408, &c.
from 1
Macc. i. to
vi. 7; 2
Macc. iii to
x and from
Jof. Hift.
lib. 11 c 7
to lib 12.
c 14.

terest to fupplant his father; and under pretence of his old age and imbecility, obtained of the king a commiffion to be the collector of the royal revenues in all the country beyond Jordan; which fo enraged his brothers, that (with their father's connivance at leaft, if not direct approbation) they confpired to way-lay him, and cut him off, as he returned: But the guards who attended him, and were to affift him in the execution of his office, proved too ftrong in the affault, wherein two of his brothers fell.

When he came to Jerufalem, however, his father would not fee him, and no body would own him; fo that he paffed over Jordan, and entered upon the execution of his office: But upon his father's death (which happened foon after) a war commenced between him and his furviving brothers, about the paternal eftate, which, for fome time, difturbed the peace of the Jews at Jerufalem. But as the high-priest, and generality of the people, fided with the brothers, he was again forced to retreat beyond Jordan, where he lived in a ftrong caftle; until Antiochus Epiphanes, fucceeding to the throne of Syria, and threatening to punifh him according to his deserts, made him, for fear of his threats, fall upon his fword, and flay himfelf.

Heliodorus
fent by Se-
leucus to
feize the
riches of
the temple,
is feverely
ufed by an
apparition
of angels.

Upon the unhappy death of Antiochus the Great *, his fon Seleucus Philopater fucceeded him in the kingdom of Syria, to which was annexed Judea, and the other adjacent provinces. At his firft acceffion, he favoured the Jews, and fupplied them with all things for the fervice of

* On his coming into the province of Elymais, hearing that in that country there was a great treafure in the temple of Jupiter Belus, and being in great difficulties how to raife money to pay the Romans, he feized the temple by night, and fpoiled it of all its riches; which fo enraged the people of the country, that to revenge this facrilege, they rofe upon him, and flew him, and all that were with him. He was a prince of that laudable charaſter for humanity, clemency, beneficence, and of great juſtice in the adminiſtration of his government, and till the fiftyeth year of his life, managed all his affairs with that valour, prudence, and application, as made him proſper in all his undertakings, and deſervedly gained him the title of *the Great*; but in the latter part of his life, declining in the wiſdom of his conduct, as well as in the vigour of his application, every thing he did then leſſened him as faſt as all his actions had aggrandiſhed him before; *Prideaux's Connection, anno 187.*

of the temple at his own expence ; but being, some time after, informed by one Simon a Benjamite, that there were great riches in the temple, he sent his treasurer Heliodorus, to make seizure of them, and bring them to Antioch. But Heliodorus, going into the temple for that purpose, and entering into the sacred treasury, was stopped in his attempt by an apparition of angels, armed, as it were, to defend the place against his sacrilegious hands ; for these are the words wherein the history of the Maccabees relates the matter—^s *There appeared unto him an horse, with a terrible rider upon him, and adorned with a very fair covering, and he ran fiercely, and smote at him ; with his fore-feet ; and he that sat upon the horse, seemed to have a complete harness of gold. Moreover, two other men appeared before him, notable in strength, excellent in beauty, and comely in apparel, who stood by him on either side, scourging him continually, and giving him many sore stripes, insomuch that he fell to the ground ; but being taken up by those that attended him, and carried off in a litter, he continued speechless, and without all hopes of life, for some time, till, at the intercession of his friends, the high-priest prayed to God for him, and so he recovered.*

A. M.
3596, &c.
Ant. Chris.
408, &c.
from 1
Macc. to
vi. 7. ; 2.
Macc. iii. to
x. and from
Josh. Hist.
lib. 11. c. 7.
to lib. 12.
c. 14.



Not long after this, the same Heliodorus, aspiring at the crown, poisoned his master Seleucus, in hopes of succeeding him : but Eumenes, king of Pergamus, and Attalus his brother, obstructed his design, and placed Antiochus, surnamed *Epiphanes*, (another son of Antiochus the Great,) upon the Syrian throne, who proved a very terrible enemy, and persecutor of the Jews. No sooner was he settled in the kingdom, but being destitute of money, and having an heavy tribute to pay to the Romans, he deposed Onias, a man of singular piety and goodness, from the high-priesthood, and for three hundred and sixty talents (which he engaged to pay yearly) sold it to his brother Jason. But as Jason had supplanted Onias, so his brother Menelaus, being sent to Antioch with this tribute-money, for three hundred talents more than Jason had given, purchased the priest-hood, and had him, in like manner, deposed : Whereupon he withdrew to the country of the Ammonites, waiting for some revolution in his favour.

Great
bribery and
corruption
among the
Jewish
high-
priests.

Thus

2 Macc. iii. 25. &c. 1 Chap. iv. 7. Joseph, de Macc. c. 4.

A. M.
3596, &c.
Ant. Christ
408, &c.
from 1
M cc i. 10
vi. 7 ; 2
Macc. iii. to
x. and from
Jof. Hif.
lib. 11. c. 7.
to lib. 12.
c. 14.

Thus Menelaus got the chief-priesthood by out-bidding his brother; but being summoned to appear before the king at Antioch, for non-payment of the money, ^u he left Lyfimachus, another of his brothers, his deputy in his absence, and, by his means, got many gold vessels out of the temple, which he selling at Tyre, and the cities round about, raised money enough, not only to pay the king his tribute, but to bribe Andronicus * likewise to murder his brother Onias, because he supposed, that at one time or other, he might stand in his way, and because he had lately taken the freedom to reprove him sharply for this gross piece of sacrilege.

Andronicus did it to earn the money, but was soon overtaken with justice at Antiochus †, and Lyfimachus ‡ slain by the people of Jerusalem; yet such was the power of

^u 2 Maccab. iv. 29.

* This Andronicus seems to have been left by Antiochus at Antioch, to govern in his absence, and without this governor's interposition, Menelaus could not compass his end, to murder his brother; for Onias had fled to the asylum at Daphne, a small distance from the city, which always used to be a place of retreat, secure and inviolable: And therefore Menelaus was forced to give the governor a round sum, to engage him (by a false promises of safety) to prevail with his brother to come out, and as soon as he had him in his power, to dispatch him: *Calmet's Commentary.*

† For Onias having, by his laudable carriage, while he lived at Antioch, gained much upon the esteem and affections of the people of the place, Greeks as well as Jews, they took his murder in such high indignation, that they both joined in a petition to the king against Andronicus for it. Hereupon, cognisance being taken of the crime, and the wicked murderer convicted of it, Antiochus caused him, with infamy, to be carried to the place where the murder was committed, and there put to death for it, in such a manner as he deserved. For Antiochus (as wicked a tyrant as he was) had sorrow and regret upon him for the death of so good a man; and therefore, in the revenging it, he satisfied his own resentments, as well as those of the people who had petitioned him for it; *Prideaux's Connect. anno 172.*

‡ When it came to be known that Lyfimachus had been the chief instrument in robbing the temple, the multitude, fired with indignation, gathered themselves together against him, and though he attempted to form a party, under the command of one Tyrannus, an old experienced officer, in order to resist their rage, and defend himself; yet the mob fell on them with such fury, that wounding some, and killing others, they forced

of bribery at the Syrian court, that by the strength of this, A. M. 3596, &c. Ant. Chris. 408, &c. from 1 Macc. i. to vi. 7; 2 Macc. iii. to x. and from Jos. Hist. lib. ii. c. 7. to lib. 12. c. 14. Menelaus, who was the contriver of all these mischiefs, found means to clear himself before Antiochus, and to get the three delegates from the Sanhedrim, who came from Jerusalem on purpose to accuse him, condemned and executed.

While Antiochus was engaged in war with Egypt, a false rumour was spread in Palestine that he was dead; and Jason thinking this a fine opportunity for him to recover his station in Jerusalem as high-priest, marched thither with above a thousand men; and having, by the assistance of the party which he had there, taken the city, and driven Menelaus into the castle, he acted all manner of cruelties upon his fellow-citizens, and put to death, without mercy, all that he could light on, whom he took to be his adversaries.

Antiochus, hearing of this, and supposing that the whole Jewish nation had revolted from him, marched with all haste out of Egypt into Judea; and * being informed, on his march, that the people of Jerusalem, on the news which came of his death, had made great rejoicings; the sense of this so provoked him against them, that laying siege to the city, and taking it by storm *, he slew of the inhabitants, in three days time, forty thousand persons, and having taken as many more captives, sold them to the neighbouring nations.

Nor

forced the rest to flee; and then seizing upon Lyfimachus, him they slew beside the treasury within the temple, and thereby, for that time, put an end to this sacrilege; *Prideaux's Connection anno 172.*

* 1 Maccab. i. 20 &c.; 2 Maccab. v. 5. 6.; Joseph. Antiq. lib. 12. c. 8.

* Both the author of the second book of the Maccabees, chap. v. 11. and Diodorus Siculus, lib. 46. tell us, that Antiochus took Jerusalem by force; and yet Josephus (in his 12th book of Antiquities, c. 7.) affirms, that he made himself master of it without any manner of difficulty, because the gates were set open to him by the treachery of a party he made in the town: But herein he is contrary to himself. For in his history of the Jewish war, lib. 1. c. 1. he says, that Antiochus took it *κατὰ κράτος*, i. e. by force; and there represents him as enraged by what he had suffered in the siege; and in the same history, (lib. 6. c. 11), he speaks of those who were slain at the siege, fighting in defence of the place. But the history of the Jewish wars, and that of his Antiquities, he wrote at different times, which might make him, in some places, not so consistent; *Prideaux's Connection.*

A. M.
3596, &c.
Ant. Christ.
408, &c.
from 1.
Macc. i. to
vi. 7.; 2.
Macc. iii. to
x. and from
Jof. Hif.
lib. 11. c. 7.
to lib. 12.
c. 14.

Nor did all this satisfy his rage; For, notwithstanding his father's edict, he forced himself into the temple*, and polluted, by his presence, both the holy place, and the holy of holies. He sacrificed a great sow upon the altar of burnt-offerings, and caused the broth (which was made of some part of the flesh) to be sprinkled all over the temple, that he might defile it as much as possible. He took away the altar of incense, the shew-bread table, the candlestick of seven branches, and several other golden vessels, utensils, and donatives of former kings, to the value of eight hundred talents of gold; and making the like plunder in the city, he returned to Antioch, leaving behind him Philip a Phrygian, a man of a cruel and barbarous temper, to be governor of Judea; Andronicus, another of the like disposition, to be governor of Samaria; and Menelaus, who was worse than all the rest, to continue still over them in the office of high-priest.

Not

* Several Heathen authors, in their account of their king Antiochus, make mention of his taking a city, that was at peace and in alliance with him, (meaning thereby Jerusalem), committing many cruelties there, and plundering the temple, wherein he found great riches; but Diodorus Siculus, in his relation of this matter, lib. 34. is more particular and express. — ‘That this prince, having intruded into the most sacred place of the temple, (which none but the high priest was permitted to enter), found there a stone-statue of a man with a long beard, and a book in his hand, mounted upon an ass. This he took for Moses, the author of the law, and founder of the nation of the Jews, and of the city of Jerusalem; and therefore, to remove the cause of that universal hatred which all nations bore to the Jews, he went about abolishing of their law; and, to this purpose, caused a large sow to be sacrificed to this image of their legislator, on an altar which he found there; and, having sprinkled the blood and the broth that he made of the victim, and therewith polluted the sacred volume of their law, he made the high-priest, and other Jews, eat of its flesh, and put out the lamp, which used to be kept perpetually burning.’ But several of these circumstances, (more especially that of a man mounted on an ass,) are no where to be found in any other history; and may therefore, not improperly, be placed among those fables, which the Heathens invented and published, on purpose to give some colour for their inveterate hatred against the Jews; *Calmet's Commentary* on 1 Maccab. i. 23.

† 2 Maccab. v. 22. 23.

Not long after this, ² there were seen at Jerusalem, ^{A. M. 3596, &c. Ant. Chris. 408, &c.} for forty days together, strange sights in the air of horsemen and footmen, armed with shields, spears, and swords, and in great companies fighting against, and charging each other, as in battle-array; which foreboded those calamities of war and desolation that soon after happened in that city and nation. For Antiochus, still breathing out rage against the poor Jews, sent Appollonius, one of his generals, with an army of two and twenty thousand men, and an express order to kill all the men that remained in Jerusalem, and to sell the women and children for slaves.

from 1 Macc. i. to vi. 7.; 2 Macc. iii. to x. and from Jos. Hist. lib. i. c. 7. to lib. 12. c. 14.

^a On his first arrival, Appollonius, carried himself peaceably, concealing his intent, and forbearing all hostilities, till the return of the Sabbath, when he put his bloody commission in execution. ^b For, falling upon the city while the people were at their devotion, he massacred many of the inhabitants, plundered the place, led away the women and children captives, and forced the few that escaped to betake themselves to deserts and caves for shelter. Nor was this all; For in a short time after Antiochus made a decree, commanding all nations to leave their ancient rites and usages, and to conform to the religion of the king; which (however expressed in general terms) was chiefly designed against the Jews.

^c The officer who was sent to see this decree put in execution, was one Athenæus, a man well versed in all the ceremonies of the Grecian idolatry, and therefore thought a proper person to initiate the people into the observance of them. On his coming to Jerusalem, ^d all sacrifices to the God of Israel were superseded, and the rites of the Jewish religion suppressed. The temple itself was dedicated to Jupiter Olympius †, (whose image was set

² Ibid. ver. 2. 3.

^a 1 Mac. i. 29. 30.

^b 2 Mac.

v. 24. &c.

^c Chap. vi. 1.

^d 1 Maccab. i. 44.

&c. Jewish Antiq. lib. 12. c. 7.

† This profanation of the temple, and the erecting of this idol in it, had long before been foretold by the prophet Daniel, under the name of *abomination of desolation*. Chap. xi. 31. For this is the description which he gives of the reign of Antiochus, and the bitter persecutions which he raised: *He shall return with indignation against the holy covenant, and have intelligence with them that forsake it. Armies shall stand on his side, and he shall pollute the sanctuary of strength, and shall take away the daily sacrifice, and there place the abomination (or abominable thing) that maketh desolate,*

A. M. 3596, &c.
Ant. Chr. f. 408, &c.
from 1 Macc. i. to vi. 7. ; 2 Macc. iii. to x. and from Jos. Hist. lib. 11. c. 7. to lib. 12. c. 14.

set up on the altar of burnt-offerings), and all the people, upon pain of death, were obliged to sacrifice to it. Those who met in caves to keep the Sabbath, if they happened to be discovered, were burnt. The book of the law was torn and cast into the fire; the circumcising of infants was forbidden; and women, accused of having circumcised their children, were led about the fireets with those children hanging about their necks, and then both cast headlong over the steepest part of the walls.

No less severity was used to enforce upon the people the Heathen worship, which the decree enjoined, than there was to deter them from their own. In every city, altars, groves, and chapels, for idols were set up, and officers sent to compel them, once every month, to offer victims to the Grecian gods, and to eat of the flesh of swine and of other unclean beasts, that were at that time sacrificed. In short, no manner of cruelty was omitted to force the Jews to abandon their religion, and turn idolaters; but though, in this terrible persecution, some of these wretched people yielded to violence, many of them chose rather to die, than to forsake the law of their God.

Among the latter sort, ^e those of the most memorable note were † Eleazer, a chief doctor of the law, and that

The brave and heroic death of Eleazer, and Solomon and her seven sons.

or (as in the margin) quite astonisheth. Such as do wickedly against the covenant, shall be corrupt by flatteries, but the people that know their God, shall do great exploits; and they that have understanding, shall instruct many; yet they shall fall by the sword, by famine, by captivity, and by spoil:—And the king shall do according to his will, and shall exalt and magnify himself above every God. He shall speak wonderful things against the God of gods and shall prosper, till the indignation be accomplished; for that which is determined shall be done, ver. 30.

^e 2 Maccab. vi. Joseph. de Maccabæis.

† Some interpreters are of opinion, that this was the same Eleazar, who, at the head of the seventy-two interpreters, that were to translate the sacred scriptures, was sent into Egypt, and that he suffered at Jerusalem, in the presence of the governor, named *Felix*; but *Ruffinus* (in his Latin paraphrase on the book of Josephus, concerning the Maccabees) will needs have it, that not only Eleazer, but the mother, and her seven sons, viz. Maccabæus, Aber, Machir, Judas, Ahas, Areth, and Jacob, (for these are the names which he gives them), were all carried from Judea to Antioch, and there suffered martyrdom. The reason of the thing, however, as well as the

tenor

that heroine Solomona, and her seven sons. Eleazar was a very aged man; yet, when his persecutors would have compelled him to eat swine's flesh, (which they forced into his mouth,) he spit it out, and even when some, in pity to his age, would have given him leave to elude the sentence, by taking a piece of any other flesh, and eating it as swine's flesh, he scorned to purchase his life at so sordid a rate, desiring them to dispatch him, rather than suffer him to be guilty of dissimulation, and stain the honour of his grey hairs with so mean an act. Nor were the seven brothers and their mother inferior to him in religious courage and magnanimity: For when the king, pretending pity to their youth, and respect to their family, (which was noble,) persuaded them to renounce their religion, and embrace that of the Gentiles, promising them great rewards and promotions, if they would comply; and when, finding that this would have no effect, he ordered the great variety of torments, which he had provided, to be shewn them, thinking thereby to affright them with the sad prospect of what they were to suffer; the instruments of death did no more terrify, than the

E 2

allurements

A. M.
3896, &c.
Ant. Chris.
408, &c.
from 1
Macc. i. to
v. 7. 2
Macc. iii. to
x. and from
J. 1. 11 ft.
1 b. 11 c. 7.
to lib. 12.
c. 14

tenor of the history, which is given us by the author of the second book of Maccabees. chap. 6. and 7. and by Josephus in the above-mentioned book, make it much more likely, that Jerusalem, and not Antioch, was made the scene of this cruelty; especially since it being designed for an example of terror to the Jews in Judea, it would have lost its force, had it been executed in any other country. But where-ever this happened, it is certain that Eleazar deserved all the commendation which the fathers have given him: For, whether we consider the purity of his sentiments, or the sublimity of his doctrine, or the delicacy of his conscience, we must acknowledge, that there are few saints in the Old Testament that have given us a more exact pattern of charity, sincerity, and magnanimity. *It becometh not our age, saith he, in any wise to dissemble, whereby many young persons might think, that Eleazar being fourscore years old and ten, were now gone to a strange religion, and so they, through my hypocrisy, and desire to live a little time, and a moment longer, should be deceived by me, and I get a stain in my old age, and make it abominable. For though, for the present time, I should be delivered from the punishment of men, yet should not I escape the hand of the Almighty, neither alive nor dead; wherefore now, manfully changing this life, I will shew myself such a one, as my age requireth,* 2 Maccab. vi. 24. &c.; Calmet's Commentary, and Prideaux's Connection, anno 167.

A. M. 3596, &c.
Ant. Chris.
408. &c.
from 1
Macc. i. to
vi. 7.; 2
Macc. iii. to
x and from
Jof. Hist.
lib. 11. c. 7.
to lib. 12.
c. 14.

allurements of the tyrant did persuade them; but, inspired with a truly holy zeal, and celestial bravery, "They unanimously declared their obedience to the law of God, and the precepts which he had delivered by Moses; assuring him, that all his cruelty could not hurt them; that the only effect their tortures could have, would be to secure to them the glorious rewards of unshaken patience, and injured virtue; but, at the same time, admonishing him, that, by the murder of so many innocent men, he would arm the divine vengeance against him, and for the momentary pains which he inflicted on them, would himself become obnoxious to everlasting torments."

This is the main purport of most of their speeches; but the variety of their tortures was almost innumerable, and, for the horror of them, inexpressible. All this while their mother stood by, beholding their sufferings, and exhorting every one, as it came to his turn, to behave gallantly. At length, when herself was only left, and the soldiers were approaching to carry her to execution, she prevented their rage, and all attempts upon her person, by throwing herself voluntarily into the fire*. Thus ended this doleful, but glorious day, with the death of the victorious Solomona, who triumphed in the sharpest agonies of her sons, and her own sufferings, and, through a sea of the most exquisite pains, waded to the port of eternal rest?

Mattathias
slays an apostate
Jew, and
the King's
commissioner, and
then takes
up arms in
defence of
his religion.

While this persecution raged at Jerusalem, † Mattathias, the son of John, the son of Simeon, the son of Asmonæus, (from whom the family had the name of *Asmonæans*), a priest of the course of Joarib†, with his five sons,

* The Latin version says, that she was dragged on the ground to execution, where, having cut off her breasts, and scourged her naked body, they flung her into a boiling cauldron: But the Arabic version, on the contrary, confirms, that, having lived to see her seven sons martyred, and lying dead on the ground before her, she flung herself into the midst of them, and praying to God, to take her out of the world, immediately expired; *Universal History*, lib. 2. c. 11.

† 1 Maccab. ii. 1. &c. Jewish Antiq. lib. 12. c. 8.

† This was the first of the twenty-four courses of the priests that served in the temple, 1 Chron. xxiv. 7. and, because Mattathias undertook to determine for the necessity of fighting on the Sabbath, in case they were assaulted by the enemy,

some

sons, John, Simeon, Judas, Eleazar, and Jonathan, retired to Modin, a little place in the tribe of Dan, and there bemoaned the hard fate of their religion and country. But they had not been long in this retreat, before Antiochus sent one of his military officers, named *Apelles*, to put his decree in execution.

Apelles, having called the people together, and told them the intent of his coming, addressed himself more particularly to Mattathias; persuading him to comply with the king's commands, that, by his example, he might influence others; and promising him withal, that, in case he would do so, he should be taken into the number of the king's friends, and promoted to great honour and riches. But to this Mattathias made answer, with a loud voice, and in the audience of all the people, that no consideration whatever should ever induce him, or any of his family, to forsake the law of their God; that the examples of those, who had apostatized, were no rule to him, nor the commandments of the greatest monarch of any validity, when they were sent to oblige him to embrace idolatry: and with these words, seeing a Jew of the place presenting himself at the Heathen altar, in order to offer sacrifice according to the king's injunctions, he ran up to the apostate, and, with a zeal like that of Phineas, slew him with his own hand; and then turning upon the king's commissioner, by the assistance of his sons, and those that were with them, dispatched him likewise, and all that attended him.

After this, Mattathias overturned the altars, and pulled down the idols that were in the place; and, having got together his own family, and invited all that were zealous for the law, to follow him, he retired to the mountains, in order to make there the best defence he could: But the Jews * had one principle, which, in the beginning

some have from hence inferred, that the people had made choice of him for their high-priest: But, besides that, this decision is not sufficient to prove this, and that it no where appears, that he ever performed the office of high-priest, but only put himself at the head of a poor distressed people, as being a person of the greatest power and authority among them, it is certain, that both Menelaus and Alcimus were then alive; and though they were wicked men, and intruders into the office, yet they were nominated by King Antiochus, (who then assumed the right of nomination) and so were looked upon as high-priests; *Calmet's Dictionary*, under the word *Mattathias*.

* By the law of Moses, the Jews were commanded to do no

A. M.
3336, &c.
Ant. Chris.
408, &c.
from ?
Macc. i. to
vi. 7 ; 2
Macc. iii. to
x and from
Jof. Hist.
lib. 11. c. 7.
to lib. 12.
c. 14.

A. M. of this resistance, had like to have ruined them quite,
 3596, &c. and that was the scrupulous observation of the Sabbath,
 Ant. Christ. even to such a degree, as not to defend themselves on that
 408, &c. day; whereof their enemies taking the advantage, destroyed
 from 1 ed great numbers of them, without their making the least
 Macc iii to opposition. Mattathias however and his followers, finding
 vi 7.; 2 the fatality of their mistake in this particular, ⁸ made a
 Macc iii to decree, (which was confirmed by the unanimous con-
 x. and from sent of all the priests and elders among them,) that, when-
 Jos Hill. ever
 lib. 11 c 7
 to lib 12.
 c. 14.

manner of work on the Sabbath day; but this was a precept which would admit of some exceptions, and what some people took in a more rigorous sense, than others. The Samaritans, for instance, thought themselves obliged to observe it to such a degree of strictness, as not to stir out of their places on that day, because the law is literally so expressed, Exod. xvi. 29., but the Jews were of opinion, that they were permitted to make their escape from danger, or to walk such a compass of ground, (which they called a *Sabbath day's journey*,) if it were for any necessary occasion, on that day. In our Saviour's time, it was allowable, they thought, to pull any animal out of a pit, or a ditch, on that day, Matth. xii. 11.; but the Talmudical doctors were for revoking that permission, and found fault with him for even healing the sick and the lame, on the Sabbath. Mattathias, and his company, by sundry experiences, were convinced, that too scrupulous an observance of the Sabbath had brought several calamities upon their nation; that Ptolemy, the son of Lagus, the first king of Egypt of that name, by assaulting Jerusalem on the Sabbath-day, (wherein the Jews would do nothing to defend themselves,) became master of it without opposition; and that (but just lately) a great number of their brethren had been passively slain, because they would not so much as handle their arms on that day; and thereupon they came to a resolution to defend themselves, whenever they were attacked, be the day what it would; but we do not find, that they came to any decision, whether they themselves were to attack the enemy on the Sabbath. On the contrary, it seems as if they had determined, that they were only permitted to repel force by force; and therefore we read that, when Pompey besieged the temple, observing that the Jews did barely defend themselves on the seventh day, he ordered his men to offer no hostilities, but only to raise the batteries, plant their engines, and make their approaches on that day, being well assured, that in doing of this, he should meet with no molestation from them; and, by this means, he carried the place much sooner, than he otherwise would have done; *Jewish Antiq. lib. 14. c. 8.*; *Jewish Wars, lib. 1. c. 5.*; and *Calmet's Commentary on 1 Maccab. ii. 14.*

⁸ 1 Maccab. ii. 40, 41.; *Jewish Antiq. lib. 12. c. 8.*

ever they were attacked on the Sabbath-day, it was lawful for them to fight for their lives, and to defend themselves in the best manner they could, which afterwards became a general rule in all their wars.

While Mattathias abode in the mountains, great multitudes of Jews, who had any true concern for their holy religion, came, and joined him; and, among these, there was a good company of Assidæans, † men mighty in valour, and extremely zealous for the law; so that, when he had got together such a number, as made the appearance of a small army, ^h he came out of his fastnesses, and, going round the cities of Judah, pulled down the Heathen altars; re-established the true worship; caused the children to be circumcised; cut off all apostates, that fell in his way; and destroyed all persecutors, where-ever he came. Having thus acted the part of a brave and prudent

A. M.
3596, &c.
Ant. Chri.
408, &c.
from 1
Macc. i. to
vi. 7; 2
Macc. iii. to
x. and from
Jos. Hist.
lib. 11. c. 7.
to lib. 12.
c. 14.

He destroys
all idolatrous wor-
ship, and,
having acted
the part
of a brave
general,
appoints
his son Ju-
das his suc-
cessor.

† When the Jewish church came to be settled again in Judea, after the return of the Babylonish captivity, there were two sorts of men among the members of it; the one, who contented themselves with that only, which was written in the law of Moses, and these were called *Zadikim*, i. e. the *righteous*; and the other, who, over and above the law, added the constitutions and traditions of the elders, and, by way of supererogation, devoted themselves to many rigorous observances; and these, being reckoned in a degree of holiness above the others, were called *Chasidim*, i. e. the *Pious*. From the former of these were derived the sects of the Samaritans, Sadducees, and Karaites, and from the latter the Pharisees, the Essenes, and Assidæans. These Assidæans, or Chasidæans, rather, (as they should be written,) were a kind of religious society, whose chief and distinguishing character was, to maintain the honour of the temple; and therefore they were not only content to pay the usual tribute for the reparation of it, but charged themselves with farther expences upon that account; for every day (except that of the great expiation) they sacrificed a lamb, besides those of daily oblation, which was called the *sin-offering of the Assidæans*. They practised greater hardships and mortifications than the rest, and their common oath was *by the temple*, for which our Saviour reproves the Pharisees, Matth. xxiii. 16. who had learned that oath of them. Mattathias however, being joined by men of this principle, who made it one of the main points of their piety to fight zealously for the defence of the temple, (which was then fallen into the hands of the Heathen,) was not a little strengthened in his party, and in some measure able to take the field; Scaliger, in *Elench. Treheresii*. &c.; Prideaux's *Connection*, anno 197.; and *Cabnet's Commentary*.

^h 1 Maccab. ii. 44. &c.; Jewish Antiq. lib. 12. c. 8.

A. M.
3595. &c.
Ant. Chrif
408, &c.
from 1
Macc. i. 10
vi. 7. ; 2
Macc. iii to
x and from
Jof. Hift.
lib. ii. c. 7
to lib. 12.
c. 14.

Judas, be-
ing made
general, o-
vercomes
Antiochus's
armies in
fix feveral
engage-
ments.

general, for the small time he had the command of his little army, Mattathias was forced at last to submit to the weight of an hundred and forty six years ; but, before his death, he called his five sons together, and, having exhorted * them to stand up valiantly for the law of God, and, with a steady courage and constancy, to fight the battles of Israel against the present persecutors, he appointed Judas to be their captain in his stead, and Simeon to be their counsellor ; and so, giving up the ghost, he was buried at Modin, in the sepulchres of his forefathers, and all the faithful in Israel made great lamentation for him.

Judas † (who is surnamed *Maccabæus*) as he had taken upon him the command, went round the cities of Judea, in

i Macc. ii. 49. &c. Jewish Antiq. lib. 12. c. 8.

* The speech which Josephus puts in the mouth of old Mattathias upon this occasion, is widely different from what we find in 1 Macc. ii. 49. &c. but not undeserving of our observation. '—My dear sons,' says he, ' my life is drawing to an end ; but I am to charge you, upon my blessing, before I leave you, that you stand firm to the cause that your father has asserted before you, without any staggering or shrinking. Remember what I have told you, and do as I have advised you. Do your utmost to support the rights and laws of your country, and to restore the order of a nation that wants but very little of being swallowed up in confusion. Have nothing to do with those that, either for fear or for interest, have betrayed it. Shew yourselves to be sons worthy of such a father ; and, in contempt of all force and extremity, carry your lives in your hands, and deliver them up with comfort ; if any occasion should require it, in defence of your country ; computing with yourselves, that this is the way to preserve yourselves in God's favour, and that, in consideration of so unshaken a virtue, he will in time restore you to the liberty of your former life and manners. Our bodies, it is true, are mortal ; but great and generous actions will make us immortal in our memory ; and that is the glory I would have you aspire to, that is to say, the glory of making the history of your lives famous to after ages by your illustrious actions.' The rest of his speech agrees with what we find in the book of Mattathias, wherein he distributes to each son the office that he knew him best qualified for ; and then concludes, ' Do but mind your business, and depend upon it, that all men of honour and piety will join with you ; ' Jewish Antiq. lib. 12. c. 8.

† The reason why Judas had the name of *Maccabæus* given him, according to the most general opinion, is, that he had the initial

in the same manner as his father had done, destroying every where all utensils and implements of idolatry; slaying all idolaters and apostate Jews; rescuing the true worshippers of God from the hands of their oppressors; and, for their better security for the future, fortifying their towns, rebuilding their fortresses, and placing strong garrisons in them. These proceedings gave the Syrian court some umbrage; and therefore Antiochus^k ordered Apollonius[†], his governor in Samaria, to raise forces, and go against him; but Judas, having defeated and slain him, made a great havock among his troops, and, finding the governor's sword among the spoils, he took it for his own use, and generally fought with it all his life after. Seron, the deputy-governor of some part of Cœlo-Syria, hearing of Apollonius's defeat, got together all the forces that were under his command, and, in hopes of gaining himself honour, came in pursuit of Judas; but, instead of that, he met with the same fate, being vanquished and slain in the manner that Apollonius was.

Enraged at these two defeats, Antiochus sent three eminent commanders, Ptolemy-Macron, Nicanor, and Gorgias,

initial letters of *Mi Camo-ka, Baelim Jehovah*, i. e. *Who is like unto thee among the gods, O Jehovah?* *Exod. xv. 11.* for the motto upon his standard; which letters, being put together, made the artificial word *Maccabi*: that from hence all that fought under that standard were called *Maccabees* or *Maccabæans*; and that he, in a more especial manner, as being the captain of them, had that name by way of eminence. It cannot be denied, indeed, but that abbreviations of this and several other kinds, were very frequent among the Jews. and that the Romans bore upon their ensigns the letters *S. P. Q. R. Senatus Populusque Romanus*; but still it must be owned, that Judas was called by this name, 1 Macc. ii. 4.—66 before ever he set up this standard; and therefore others chuse rather to derive it from the Hebrew words *Mak-ke baiah*, i. e. *a conqueror in the Lord*, which explication both the double *c* which occurs in the word *Maccabee*, and his father's account of Judas, viz. that he had been mighty and strong even from his youth, seem to favour; *Prideaux's Connection*, anno 167; and *Calmet's Commentary* on 1 Macc. ii. 4.

^k 1 Macc. iii. 10. *Jewish Antiq. lib. 11. c. 10.*

[†] This, in all probability, was the same Apollonius whom Antiochus sent at first to plunder Jerusalem, and afterwards to set up the statue of Jupiter Olympius, and to compel the Jews to relinquish their religion; *Calmet's Commentary*.

¹ 1 Macc. iii. 13. &c. *Joseph. Antiq. lib. 12. c. 10.*

A. M. Gorgias, to manage the war against the Jews; who, with an army of forty thousand foot, and seven thousand horse, together with a great number of auxiliaries from neighbouring nations, and renegado Jews, ^m came, and encamped at Emmaus *, not far from Jerusalem. Judas, on the other hand, marched with his men to Mizpeh, † where, having implored God's merciful assistance in this time of distress, and ‡ encouraged them in words proper

per
 c. 14. ^m Ver. 39. &c. and Josephus, *ibid*.

* This was a village lying to the west of Jerusalem, and between seven and eight miles from it. It was honoured with our Saviour's presence after his resurrection, and therein were hot baths, (for Emmaus comes from the Hebrew *Chamath*, which signifies *baths of hot water*) that were very beneficial to those that used them; *Calmet's Dictionary*, under the word.

† At this time Jerusalem was in the hands of the Heathens, and the sanctuary trodden under foot; so that Judas could not assemble his men there, to implore the assistance of God in this time of imminent danger; and therefore he repaired to Mizpeh, a place where the people oftentimes used to assemble to prayer, (Jud. xx. 1. 1 Kings xv. 22. 2 Chron. xvi. 6.) Here he and all his army addressed themselves to God, in solemn fasting and prayer, for his assistance and protection: And herein he acted the part of a wise and religious commander, as knowing that the battle was the Lord's, and that therefore it would be impious to begin any such enterprise, without first imploring the divine aid; *Prideaux's Connection*, anno 166

‡ The speech which Judas makes to his men upon this occasion, as we have it in Josephus, is a very excellent one:—
 'We shall never have,' says he. 'my fellow soldiers and companions, such an opportunity again of shewing our bravery in the defence of our country, and the contempt of all dangers, as we have now before us; for, upon the issue of to-morrow's combat depends, not only our liberty, but all the comforts and advantages that attend it; and, over and above the blessing of such a freedom, our very religion lies at stake with it too, and we cannot secure the one, but by preserving the other. Bethink yourselves well, therefore, what it is you are to contend for, and you will find it to be no less than the sum and substance of the greatest happiness that you have ever enjoyed, that is to say, in the peaceable possession of your ancient laws, rites and discipline. Now, whether you will rather chuse to perish with infamy, and to involve the miserable remainder of all your countrymen in the same ruin, or to venture one generous push for the redemption of yourselves and your friends, that is the single question. Death is the same thing to the coward that it is to the valiant man, and as cer-

tain

per on such an occasion to fight for their religion, laws, and liberties, with a courage undaunted, and (as the cause was God's) with a firm assurance of success, he led them forth to the engagement. But, having first caused proclamation^a to be made, that all such as had that year built houses, planted vineyards, betrothed wives, or were in any degree fearful, should depart, his six thousand men, which he had at first, were reduced to three thousand.

^o With this handful of men, however, he was resolved to give the enemy battle. But hearing, that Gorgias was detached from them with five thousand foot, and a thousand horse, to surprise his camp by night, he countermined his plot by another of the same kind: For, quitting his own camp, and marching towards the enemy, he fell upon them, (while Gorgias with the best of his forces was absent,) and put them into such a surprise and confusion, that they took to their heels, and fled, leaving him master of their camp, and three thousand of their men dead upon the spot.

Gorgias, coming to the Jewish camp, found it empty; and concluding from thence, that Judas had fled into the mountains for fear, he pursued him thither; but, when he found him not, and was returning to his own camp, he understood that it had been entered and burnt; that the main army was broken and fled; and that Judas was ready in the plains to give him a warm reception. Hereupon he could no longer keep his men together; for, seized with a panic fear, they flung down their arms, and fled: When Judas, putting himself in pursuit of them, slew great numbers more, so that the whole amounted to nine thousand, and of those that escaped from the battle, most were sore wounded and maimed. Judas,^p with

F 2

his

tain to the one as the other; but there is great difference in point of honour, and everlasting fame, between a gallant man, that falls in vindication of his religion, liberties, laws, and country, and a scoundrel that abandons all for fear of losing a life which he cannot save at last. Take these things into your thoughts, and make this use of the meditation. You have nothing to trust to but God's providence, and your own concurring resolutions, and, at the worst, while we contend for victory, we can never fail of glory; *Jewish Antiq. lib. 12. c. 11.*

^a Deut. xx. 7, 8.^o 1 Macc iv. 1. &c.^p 1 Macc. iv. 23. &c. *Jewish Antiq. lib. 11. c. 10.*

A. M.
3596. &c.
Ant. Christ.
408, &c.
from 1
Macc. i. to
vi. 7.; 2
Macc. iii. to
x. and from
Jof. Hist.
lib. ii. c. 7.
to lib. 2.
c. 14.

his victorious army, returning from the chase, entered the enemy's camp, where he found plenty of rich plunder; and so proceeding in triumph to Jerusalem, celebrated the next day (which was the Sabbath) with great devotion, rejoicing and praising God for this signal and merciful deliverance.

Judas, after this, having intelligence, that Timotheus, a governor of the country beyond Jordan, and Bacchides, another lieutenant in those parts, were drawing forces together, in order to invade him, marched directly against them; and, having overthrown them in a great battle, slew above twenty thousand of their men, enriched his army with their spoils, and, out of them, provided himself with arms, and other things necessary for the future carrying on of the war.

Lyfias, whom the king, when he went upon his expedition into Persia, had constituted chief governor of all the country from Euphrates to Egypt, being vexed and ashamed at all these defeats, put himself at the head of an army of sixty thousand foot, and five thousand horse; and marching into Judea, with a full intent to destroy the country, and all its inhabitants, he pitched his camp at Bethzura, * a strong place lying to the south of Jerusalem, near the confines of Idumea †. There Judas met him with

* 2 Maccab. viii. 30, 31.
Jewish Antiq. ibid.

† 1 Maccab. iy. 26, &c.;

* It had been fortified by King Rehoboam. (2 Chron. xi. 7.), and was, at this time, a very important fortress, as being one of the keys of Judea on the south side of Idumea; *Universal History*, lib. 2. c. 11.

† Where-ever the name of Idumea, or the land of Edom, occurs in any of the writings of the Old Testament, it is to be understood of that Idumea, or land of Edom, which lay between the Lake of Sodom and the Red-sea, and was afterwards called *Arabia Petraea*. But the inhabitants of this country, being driven out by the Nabathæans, while the Jews were in the Babylonish captivity, and their land laid desolate, they then took possession of as much of the southern part of it as contained what had formerly been the whole inheritance of the tribe of Simeon, and half of the tribe of Judah, where, at this time, they dwelt, but had not as yet embraced the Jewish religion. And this is the only Idumæa, and the inhabitants of it the only Idumæans, or Edomites, which are any where spoken of after the Babylonish captivity. After their coming into this country, Hebron, which had formerly been the metropolis of the

with ten thousand men only; and having engaged his numerous army, and slain five thousand of them, the rest he put to flight, and sent Lyfias back again with his baffled forces to Antioch, but with a purpose to come again with a greater strength another year.

A. M.
3396, &c.
Ant. Chrif.
408, &c.
from 1
Macc. i. to
vi. 7.; 2
Macc iii. to
x. and from
Jof. Hift.
lib. 11. c 7.
to lib. 11.
c. 14.

By this retreat of his, Judas having made himself mafter of all Judea, thought it his duty to purge the houfe of the Lord, and to remove thofe profanations, which for three years laft paft, it had been forced to fubmit to. To this purpofe, he appointed a certain number of priefts to cleanse the sanctuary, to pull down the altar which the Heathens had fet up, and to build another of ^s unhewn stones, to confecrate the courts anew, and to make all things again fit and commodious for the fervice of God.

He purifies
the temple
and blocks
up the fort
of Aera.

Antiochus, in his facrilegious pillage of the temple, (which we have related,) had taken away the altar of incense, the table of the fhew-bread, the golden candle-ftick, and feveral other veffels, and utensils, without which the fervice could not regularly be performed; but out of the fpoils ^t which Judas had taken from the enemy, he was able to have all thefe things made anew, of the fame metal, and in the fame manner as they were before; and having thus put all things in their proper order, he had the temple dedicated again, with as much folemnity as the prefent ftate of affairs would permit, and in commemoration hereof, appointed a feftival ^{*} of eight days continuance (which began on the fifth of the month Chiflevu, much about the twentieth of our November) to be annually obferved.

But

the tribe of Judah, became the capital of Idumea, and between that and Jerufalem, lay Bethzura, a ftong fortrefs, which the author of the fecond book of Maccabees, chap xi. 5. places at no more than five furlongs diftance from Jerufalem; but this is a vifible miftake; for Eufebius makes it, at leaft, twenty miles diftant from it; *Prideaux's Connection*, anno 165.

^s Exod. xx. 25.; Deut. xxviii. 5.; Jofh. viii. 31.

^t 1 Maccab. iv. 49.

^{*} This feftival is commemorated in the gofpel, John ii. 23. and our blefled Sayiour, we are told, came up to Jerufalem on purpofe to bear a part in the folemnifing of it. Some indeed are of opinion, that it was another dedication-feaft, which Chrift thus honoured with his prefence: but befides that the dedications both of Solomon's and Zerubbabel's temples who (though they were very folemnly celebrated at the firft erection of thefe temples) had never any anniversary feaft afterwards kept in com.

A. M.
3596, &c.
Ant. Chris.
408, &c.
from 1
Macc. i. to
vi. 7; 2.
vacc. iii. to
Mand from
Jos. Hist.
lib. 11. c. 7.
to lib. 12.
c. 14

But though the temple was recovered and restored to its former use, yet Apollonius, at his taking Jerusalem, had erected a fortress on mount Acra †, which commanding the mountain of the temple, and being still in the hands of the enemy, gave him the advantage of annoying all those who went up to the temple to worship. To remedy this inconvenience, Judas at first, blocked up the fortresses; but finding that he could not conveniently spare such a number of men as were necessary for that purpose, ^u he caused the mountain of the temple to be fortified with strong walls, and high towers, and placed therein a sufficient garrison, both to defend it, and protect those who went up to worship.

When the neighbouring nations came to understand that the Jews had recovered the city and temple of Jerusalem, and again restored the worship of God in that place, ^x they were moved with such envy and hatred against them,

commemoration of them, the very history of the gospel (which tells us, that it was kept in winter) confines us to this dedication of Judas only. That of Solomon was on the seventh month, which fell about the time of the autumnal equinox: and that of Zerubbabel was on the twelfth month, which fell in the beginning of the spring; but that of Judas Maccabeus was on the twenty-fifth day of the ninth month, which fell in the middle of winter. So that the feast of the dedication which Christ was present at in Jerusalem, was no other than that which was instituted by Judas, in commemoration of his dedication of the temple anew, after that it had been cleansed from idolatrous pollutions: and from hence Grotius (in his Commentary on the gospel of St John, chap. x. 22.) very justly observes, that festival days, in memory of public blessings, may be piously instituted by persons in authority, without a divine command; *Prideaux's Connection. anno 166.*

† The word *Acra*, which is of Greek original, signifies in general a *citadel*, in which sense the Syrians and Chaldeans used it: But when Antiochus gave orders for the building of a citadel on the north side of the temple upon an eminence, that commanded it, the hill itself was called by the name of *Acra*; which, according to Josephus, lib. 12. c. 7 and 14. was in the form of a semicircle. John Maccabeus took it out of the hands of the Syrians, who there kept a garrison, and pulled down its fortifications, and in their room, were afterwards built the palace of Helena, and that of Agrippa, a place where the public records were kept, and another where the magistrates of Jerusalem assembled; *Calmet's Dictionary*, under the word.

^u 1 Macc. iv. 60.; Jewish Antiq. lib. 12. c. 11. ^x 1 Macc. v. 1. &c.

them, that they proposed to join with Antiochus in the extirpation of the whole nation; and accordingly had put all to death whom they found sojourning among them: But Judas, having first fortified Bethzura, to be a barrier against the Idumæans, who, at this time, were bitter enemies to the Jews, made war against them, and all the other nations that had confederated against him, in such a manner, and with such success, as shall hereafter be related.

A. M. 3596, &c.
Ant. Chris. 408, &c.
from 1.
Macc. i. 10
vi. 7; 2.
Macc. iii. 10
2 and from
Jos. Hist.
lib. 11, c. 7.
tolib. 12.
c. 14.

Antiochus, in his expedition into Persia, was not so successful as he expected: For being informed that Elymais, a city in that country, was an opulent place, wherein stood the temple of Diana †, where immense riches were to be found, he marched his army thither, with an intent to plunder both it and the temple: But the country round about, taking the alarm, joined with the inhabitants in the defence of the city and temple, and having beat him off, they obliged him to return to Ecbatana in Media, where, with shame and confusion, having received

† Chap. vi. 1. &c.

† Other authors agree with the account in the first book of Maccabees, that the temple of Elymais was prodigiously rich; and both Polybius and Diodorus Siculus (as they are cited by St. Jerom, on Pan. xi.) mention this attempt of the king of Syria to plunder it. But the manner in which he came to be disappointed, is related quite differently in the second book of Maccabees. For therein we are told, that when Antiochus, pretending that he would marry the goddess of the temple (whose name was Nanea) that thereby he might have the better title to the riches of it, by way of dowry, was let into the temple, to take possession of them, the priests opened a secret door that was in the ceiling, and from thence threw upon him and his attendants such a shower of stones as quite overwhelmed them, and so cut off their heads, and cast them out, 2 Maccab. i. 13. &c.; but who the goddess Nanea, who had this temple at Elymais, was, the conjectures of the learned are various, since some will have her to be Venus, and others Cybele the mother of the gods, because the word in the Persian language signifies *mother*, though the most common opinion is, that she was Diana, or the Moon, the same that Strabo calls *Anais*, or *Anaitis*: For that she was held to be a virgin-goddess is plain, because Antiochus pretended to espouse her, and that she was a chaste goddess, Plutarch (De Artaxerxes) seems to intimate, when he tells us, that Artaxerxes took the beautiful Aspasia (whom himself was in love with) from his son Darius, and devoted her to a perpetual virginity, in the service of Anais, the goddess of Ecbatana; *Calmet's Commentary* on 1 Maccab. vi. 1.

Antiochus's
defeat, dis-
appoint-
ment, and
miserable
end at last.

A. M. received news of the ill success of his arms in Judea, and
 3596, &c. how the Jews had pulled down the images and altars
 Ant. Chris. that he had erected, recovered their temple at Jerusalem,
 408, &c. and restored that place to its former worship, he made
 from 1. all the haste home he possibly could, threatening, as he
 Macc. i. to v. 7; 2. went, along, utterly to destroy the whole nation, and
 Macc. iii. to x. and from make Jerusalem the common place of sepulture to all the
 Jos. Hist. Jews. But ² while these proud words were in his mouth,
 lib. 11. c. 7. the judgements of God overtook him; for he was instant-
 to lib. 12. ly seized with a pain in his bowels, and a grievous torment
 c. 14. in his inward parts, which no remedy could assuage. Be-
 ing resolute however in his revenge, he ordered his chari-
 oteer to double his speed; but in the rapid motion, the
 chariot was overturned, and he thrown to the ground with
 such violence, as sorely bruised his whole body, and mash-
 ed (as it were) his limbs with the fall; so that being able
 to travel no farther, he was forced to put in at Tabæ, a lit-
 tle town in the confines of Persia and Babylonia, where he
 suffered most exquisite torments both of body and mind.
 In his body, a filthy ulcer broke out in his privy parts,
 wherein were bred an innumerable quantity of vermin,
 continually flowing from it, and such a stench proceeding
 from thence, as neither those that attended him, nor even
 he himself could well bear: And in this condition he lay,
 languishing and rotting, till he died. In his mind, his
 torments were no less, by reason of the several spectres and
 apparitions of evil spirits which he imagined were conti-
 nually about him, reproaching and stinging his conscience
 with accusations of the evil deeds which he had been
 guilty of. Being made sensible at length by his afflic-
 tions, that all his sufferings were from the hand of God,
 for his plundering and profanation of his temple at
 Jerusalem, and for his hatred and cruelties to his ser-
 vants, who worshipped there ^a he made an ample ac-
 knowledgement of this before he died, and many vows
 and solemn promises of a full reparation, in case he re-
 covered. But his repentance * came too late: And there-
 fore,

² 2 Maccab. ix. 5. &c.

^a 1 Maccab. vi. 12, 13. &c.

2 Maccab. ix. 11. 18.: Joseph. Antiq. lib. 12. c. 13.

* This wicked king is an example of all hardened sinners, and false penitents, whose only motive of turning to God, is their fear, or feeling of punishment. The Maccabean martyrs had threatened, or rather foretold, that *through the judgement of God, he should receive a just punishment for his pride*, 2 Maccab.

fore, after having languished out a while in this miserable condition, and under these horrid torments of body and mind, at length, being half consumed with the rottenness of his ulcer, he gave up the ghost, and died, after he had reigned eleven years.

A. M.
3596, &c.
Ant. Chris.
408, &c.
from 1
Macc. to
vi. 7. ; 2.
Macc. iii. to
x. and from
Joth. Hist.
lib. ii. c. 7.
to lib. 12.
c. 14.

THE OBJECTION.

‘ Antiochus Epiphanes, we allow, was a very wicked man, and a great persecutor of the Jewish church and nation; but it does not appear from any other historian, ^b that he died in the miserable manner that is here related; that he had any remorse of conscience for having slain the Jews, and pillaged the temple; or was frightened, upon that account, with spectres and apparitions, before he died. On the contrary, we find, even by the confession of Josephus ^c himself, that he was a man of a frank and generous temper, and had therefore the character ^d of the magnanimous and munificent; that he had conferred several benefits ^e upon the Jews, as this author of the book of the Maccabees makes him speak; that what severities he inflicted upon them, were with a good intent (as Tacitus ^{*} reports) to cure them of their superstition, and to establish an uniformity of religion throughout his kingdom; and that, upon this account therefore, there was no reason for any remorse or recantation in him, or for any judgement from God in the singularity of his death.

‘ It might be thought fit, however, in a book designed on purpose to aggrandize the Jewish nation, (as the history of the Maccabees seems to be,) to have every thing turn upon the marvellous. For is it not unaccountable, that Judas Maccabæus, with such an handful of men, as the history gives him, should rout and destroy such multitudes of veteran troops, and that ^f without any

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G

‘ swords

vii. 36. and therefore, when he called, God would not answer; but (as the royal penman expressed) laughed at his calamity, and mocked when his distress and anguish came upon him, Prov. i. 26, 27.

^b 2 Maccab. ix.^c Lib. 12 c. 11.^d Μεγαλόψυχος^e φιλόδοτος^f 1 Maccab. iv. 26.

* His words are these,—Rex Antiochus, demere superstitionem, et mores Græcorum dare adnixus, quo minus teterrimam gentem in melius mutaret, Partharum bello prohibitus est, lib. 5.

^f 1 Maccab. iv. 6.

A. M. 3596, &c. Ant. Chris 408 &c. from 1 Macc. i. to vi. 7; 2 Macc. iii to x and from Jos. Hist. l b. 11 c. 7 to lib 12 c. 14.

‘ swords or armour; and, in one expedition, fight battles, disperse armies, relieve some towns, take others by storm, and all this ^s without the loss of one man?’

‘ Is not this very wonderful. that the Jewish people (above all others) should be forewarned of an approaching war, or any other national ^h calamity, by apparitions in the air; or that, at this time (above all others) they should have their temple secured from all profane and sacrilegious hands by a celestial guard of angels? Ptolemy Philopater might possibly be struck with the awfulness of the place, and so retire; but the adventure of ^k Heliodorus, and the angel mounted on horseback to guard the sacred treasures, while two others, on foot, were cutting and scourging him without mercy, seems to go beyond the extravagance of a romance, and makes the conduct of the elephants ^l, in sparing the poor Jews, and falling upon the spectators, less surprising.’

Answered, by shewing that Epiphanes is thus represented by Ptolemy.

Of what weight and authority both the history of the Maccabees, and that of the Jews by Josephus ought to be accounted we shall have occasion to inquire in the two following chapters, and need only here observe, that what the Maccabæan history has recorded of Antiochus Epiphanes is, in a great measure, confirmed by the testimony of Polybius, an exact historian, who was contemporary with him, and could not therefore be at a loss for proper instructions in what he wrote, Epiphanes (according to ^m him) was a man of great expence, and squandered away vast sums in the gratification of his lusts and amours, in the gifts he bestowed upon his favourites; and the entertainments he made for the people: But then Athenæus ⁿ informs us, ‘ that all these expences were made, partly out of the gifts which his friends sent him, partly out of the prey which he took from Ptolemy king of Egypt, when he was a minor; but chiefly out of the spoils of the many temples which he sacrilegiously robbed.’

^o *I was bountiful, and beloved in my power, and ^p I have done great benefits, both public and private, to the Jews.* These were the vain boasts of the dying tyrant: But

^s Chap. v. 54.

^h 2 Maccab. v. 2, 3.

^k Chap.

iii 24 &c.

^l Chap. xi. 11.

^m Deipnosoph. lib. 6.

ⁿ Apud. Athenæum, lib. 5.

^o 1 Maccab. vi. 11.

^p 2 Maccab. ix. 26.

But since the same Polybius ^a tells us, that his distemper so far grew upon him, as to come to a constant delirium, or state of madness, these expressions, we may suppose, came from him, ^r when he was in that condition. For we know no instances of his kindness, but many of his cruelty to the people of God; and, as to his bounty, (as he calls it,) this he usually committed in his drunken frolics, ^s in which he spent a great part of his revenues, and used often to go out into the streets, and to scatter his money, in handfuls, among the rabble. We may therefore reasonably suppose, that such a wild, crack-brained creature as this, had seldom any serious thought of establishing an uniformity in religion (though that religion, by the by, was impious) in his dominions; but that to justify the depredations that he made upon the Jews, and to revenge the defeats which they had so frequently given to his armies, these were the true reasons of his exasperation against them; because it is not conceivable, how he could have any sober sense of religion, who, to satisfy his greedy avarice, was not afraid to rob the temple of Diana.

A. M.
3596, &c.
Ant. Christ.
408, &c.
from 1
Macc. i. to
vi. 7; 2
Macc. vi. to
x. and from
Jof. Hist.
lib. 11. c. 7.
to lib. 12.
c. 14.

This robbing of temples, in the opinion of all sober Heathens, was accounted a crime of that heinous nature as justly deserved the vengeance of heaven; and therefore Polybius ^t, as well as the author of the Maccabees, informs us, that Antiochus, before he died, was scared with visions, and apparitions of evil spirits; but then he supposes, that it was the goddess Diana, that thus haunted him, for his attempting to pillage her temple at Elymais; whereas he himself, in the presence of all his friends, openly declares, that these troubles were come upon him, because ^u *he had taken all the vessels of gold and silver that were in Jerusalem, and had destroyed the inhabitants of Judea without a cause.*

The sacrilege at Elymais was only intended, not executed: But that at Jerusalem was committed, with horrid impiety against God, and as horrid cruelty against all those that served him there. But even if the former had been committed, it was only against a false deity; whereas the latter was against the true God, the great and almighty Creator of heaven and earth: And therefore we need less wonder, that the marks of a divine infliction were so visible

G 2

fible

^a In excerptis Valesii.^r Calmer's Commentary.^s Athenæus, lib. 10.^t In excerptis Valesii.^u 2

Maccab. vi. 12, 13.

A. M.
3596. &c.
Ant. Chris.
408, &c.
from 1
Macc. i. to
vi. 7.; 2
Macc. iii. to
x and from
Jos. Hist.
lib. 11. c. 7.
to lib. 12.
c. 14

sible in the nature of his disease. Appian * and Polybius y, as well as Josephus, and the author of the books of Maccabees, have informed us, that he died with ulcers, and putrifying sores in his secret parts; and, upon this occasion, we cannot forbear remarking, that most of the great persecutors of the church of God have been smitten in the like manner; that thus died Herod, the great persecutor of Christ, and the infants at Bethlehem; thus Galerius Maximianus, the author of the tenth, and greatest, persecution against the Christians; and thus Philip the second, king of Spain, who was as infamous for the cruelty of his persecution, and the numbers destroyed by it, as any of the other three. z It is no small confirmation therefore of what the Jewish writers relate concerning the judgements of God upon Antiochus, that these Heathen authors (whose credit is thought indubitable) do agree with them as to the matter of fact, though they differ from them, in assigning a wrong cause for it.

That Judas Maccabæus might do all the gallant actions recorded of him.

a. *If you will walk in my statutes, and keep my commandments, and do them, ye shall chase your enemies, and they shall fall before you: Five of you shall chase an hundred, and an hundred of you shall put ten thousand to flight, and your enemies shall fall before you by the sword.* This is the promise which God made to the children of Israel, upon their entrance into the land of Canaan; and, in virtue of this promise, we find that their leader Joshua was so very successful, that, after he had relieved the city of Gibeon, destroyed twelve kings, and made himself master of their dominions, in one campaign only, it is said of him, that *b he returned, and ALL Israel with him, unto the camp to Gilgal*: And therefore we need less wonder, that the Jews, who at this time were under the conditions of God's promise, nay, under a state of persecution upon the account of their religion, and were consequently the proper objects of his more immediate care and compassion, should come off victorious, even though they were but poorly armed, and sometimes without the loss of one man, having the Lord of Hosts on their side, both to inject terror into their enemies, and to *cover their heads in the day of battle*; But, even without this supposition

* In Syriacis
deaux's Connection, anno 164.
p Josh. x. 43.

y In excerptis Valefii.

z Pri-
Levit. xxvi. 3. &c.

supposition of a divine interposal, might there not be some remarkable difference in the soldiers and generals themselves? A. M. 3596, &c. Ant. Chris. 428, &c.

Judas Maccabæus, an excellent commander, bold and enterprising, with a small body of men, but all determined to conquer or die, attacks one of no capacity, with a much larger army indeed, but made up chiefly of raw men, and forces levied in haste. He attacks him, I say, and defeats him; and are not miracles of this kind very common? from 1. Macc. i. 10 vi. 7.; 2. Macc. iii. to x. and from Jos. Hif. lib. 11. c. 7. to lib. 12. c. 14.

Do not both ancient and modern history furnish us with victories in great abundance of this sort, and much more surprising than any obtained by the Maccabees? ^c The contempt of a weak enemy, whose forces are so disproportionate to the numerous army which comes against them, is one of the greatest errors, as well as dangers, that can happen in war; because, in this case people are less upon their guard, not thinking the enemy capable of daring to undertake any thing against them, until they are surprised in their security; and an army surprised in their camp, we know, is an army half conquered.

Though therefore the Jews, under the command of the gallant Judas, were always fewest in number, yet, considering the boldness of their undertakings, and the prudence of their conduct, their skill in the military art ^{*}, and the providence of God, which attended and prospered their arms, the wonder is not much, that they were, in a manner, always superior to their enemies.

There shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars, i. e. in the heavens, where they move, and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity: These were the presages, which our Saviour foretold; and, accordingly Josephus ^d informs us, that, before the last siege of Jerusalem, there were seen in the air, a little before sun-set, Aerial apparitions not uncommon, and sometimes real.
for

^c Calmet's Dictionary, under the word *Bethzur*.

^{*} It is indeed surprising, that Polybius, a historian. in other things so punctual, and so well acquainted with the affairs of Asia, should make no mention of the Maccabees, nor of the wars which they maintained with so much glory against Antiochus, and his successors, especially since he describes the wars of the same Antiochus, in other respects, with all the care and exactness that can be desired; *Calmet's Dictionary*, under the word *Modin*.

^d De Bello Jud. lib. 7. c. 12.

A. M. 3596, &c. Ant. Chriſt. 408. &c. from 1 M cc. i. to vi 7 ; 2 Macc. iii to x. and from Joſ. Hiſ lib. 11. c. 7 to lib 12. c. 14.

for ſome days together, chariots and armed men, paſſing along the clouds, round about the city ; “ which I would “ hardly venture to report,” ſays he, “ but that I can “ produce fundry eye-witneſſes, that are ſtill alive, to con- “ firm the truth of it.” Several accounts of this kind we have in Livy, and Suetonius : And though it muſt be own- ed, that too great a credulity in ſome hiſtorians may poſſi- bly have enlarged, or multiplied theſe prodigies, yet we muſt not therefore imagine, that there never were any ſuch things, becauſe very good reaſons may be given why God ſhould exhibit them : And, as to the *phenomena* that ^c are now under conſideration, they certainly have all the marks of credibility in them that we can well deſire. For they are related by an author, that was cotemporary, or very near cotemporary, with them. They were ſeen, not tran- ſiently, and by a few weak ſuperſtitious people ; but, for forty days together, they appeared to the view of a whole city, wherein were above an hundred thouſand inhabitants, moſt of ſound intellects, and ſome of them of ſo little ſuperſtition, as to abandon the laws and cuſtoms of their country for fear of perſecution.

Why Pto- lemy might be imitator by God up- on his en- tering the Holy of Holies.

The Jews have a tradition, founded upon what we read in the 2d book of the Maccabees ^f, viz. that, ſome time before the Babylonish captivity, the prophet Jeremiah re- ceived inſtructions from God to hide the ark of the cove- nant in a cave in mount Nebo, which accordingly he did, and at the ſame time declared, that the place ſhould not be diſcovered, until the people's return from their captivi- ty ; that, after the people's return, in the time of Nehe- miah, this ark was found out, and replaced in the ſanctua- ry of the temple ; that when Pompey ^g entered the ſanctua- ry, he ſaw an ark and cherubims, like thoſe which Moſes had made ; and that, ſome time after, the ſame ark was carried before Veſpaſian, when, from the Jewiſh wars, he returned to Rome in triumph.

Now, upon the ſuppoſition that there is any truth in this tradition, and the ark of the covenant was in fact re- placed in the ſecond temple, the hiſtory of Uzzah will in- form us of what ſacred account, in the eſteem of God, this repoſitory of the divine covenant was, and how ſevere- ly God, in his caſe, was pleaſed to avenge the leaſt viola- tion of it. For, if the *anger of the Lord was kindled againſt* Uzzah,

^c Calmet's Commentary.

^f Calmet's Diſſ. ſur l'Arche d'alliance.

^g Chap. ii. 4.—9.

Uzzah, so that he smote him dead upon the spot for his rashness in taking hold of the ark, even because he was no priest, no descendent of the house of Aaron; why should it be thought a strange thing, that God should shew some tokens of his displeasure against an Heathen prince, intruding into the place which he had consecrated for his own presence and inhabitation? Or, if we suppose, that the Shekinah, or presence of God, was not resident in the second temple; yet still the Holy of Holies was reserved for the entrance of none but the high-priest; and therefore it is no more than what might be expected, that he, who, in contempt of the divine command, and the remonstrances of all about him, would intrude into it, should meet with some severe rebuke, that thereby he might be convinced of the power of the God of Israel and of the divine institution of their religion. And, though it be acknowledged, that Pompey met with no remarkable judgment, in the instant when he was guilty of the like profanation, yet ^h our learned connector of the sacred and profane history has observed, that after this act he never prospered; that this put an end to all his successes; insomuch, that this, over the Jews, was the last of his victories. So mindful has God all along been, not to suffer the profaners of his sanctuary to go unpunished!

A M.
3596, &c.
Ant. Christ.
408, &c.
from 1.
Macc. i. to
vi. 7; 2.
Macc. iii. to
x and from
Jof. Hist.
lib. i. c. 7.
to lib. 12.
c. 14.

The intended destruction of all the Egyptian Jews at Alexandria, in the barbarous manner wherein the author of the second book of the Maccabees has related it, can hardly be thought an incredible thing to those who have read in Philo ⁱ the like, if not worse, cruelties, which the same people underwent in the same town, in the reign of Caligula, and under the administration of Flaccus. — That they were not only driven from their habitations, plundered of their goods, and cooped up in a narrow corner of the city in order to be starved; but that, if any attempting to make their escape were apprehended, they were either knocked on the head, torn limb from limb, or tortured to death, and their dead bodies dragged through the streets; and, if any pretended to lament them, they were immediately seized, whipped without mercy, and having suffered all the torments that cruelty could invent, were condemned at last to be crucified: — That, without any regard to sex or condition, without any respect to the aged, or compassion to the young,

That he
really de-
signed to
destroy all
the Jews at
Alexandria.

^h Anno 64. i Vol. 2. p. 525. &c. ex. edit. Mangeana.

A. M.
3596, &c.
Ant. Chriſt.
408, &c.
from 1.
Macc. i. to
vi. 7:12
Macc. iii. to
x. 2nd from
Joſ. H. ſt.
lib. ii. c. 7
to lib. 12.
c. 14.

young, not only whole families were burnt together, but ſome, being tied to ſtakes, had fires of green wood kindled round them, in order to prolong their torments, and that the ſpectators might have the horrid pleaſure of ſeeing the poor creatures ſuffocated in the ſmoke.—That, on the very feſtival of the emperor's birth-day, (which generally laſted for ſome time,) thirty-eight of their council, perſons of the moſt diſtinguiſhed note among them, were bound like criminals, ſome with cords, and ſome with chains, and ſo dragged through the great market-place to the theatre, and there whipped ſo unmercifully, that ſome of them did not long ſurvive it.—Nay, that, at this time more eſpecially, it was an uſual thing with the people, when they came to the theatre, firſt to entertain themſelves with ſcourging, racking, and torturing the poor Jews at their pleaſure, and then, to call for their dancers and players, and other diverſions in uſe among the Romans: Whoever has read, I ſay; the account of theſe cruelties, as Philo has related them, need not much wonder to find an exaſperated prince (as Ptolemy was) intending the total deſtruction of a people, he imagined had offended him; when a bare Roman preſect, (as Flaccus was no more,) without any provocation, that we hear of, was not afraid to treat the ſame people in this inhuman manner.

Why the
elephants
might turn
upon the
ſpectators.

But then, as to the former caſe, if we will allow the providence of God, and its interpoſition in the occurrences of this world, we need not want a reaſon, why he ſhould turn the elephants, which were deſigned to deſtroy the innocent, upon the ſpectators, who could not be ſo; becauſe both his juſtice and mercy ſeem to plead for the deliverance of thoſe, whoſe only crime was their profeſſion of his true religion, and for the puniſhment of ſuch as came to glut their eyes with the helliſh pleaſure of ſeeing their fellow-creatures trampled to pieces. In this ſenſe, there ſeems to be a neceſſary call for a divine interpoſition; but, abſtracted from this conſideration, the wonder is not great, that creatures intoxicated (as theſe elephants are ſaid to have been) ſhould miſtake their objects, and fall foul upon thoſe that they were leaſt of all intended to deſtroy.

Angels appearing in
armour, a
common
tradition.

There is ſomething, we confeſs, more wonderful, in the appearances of angels mounted, as it were, on horſeback, ^k heading the Jewish army, ^l protecting the Jewish

^k 2 Maccab. xi. 8.

^l Ibid. ver. 10.

Jewish general, and ^m defending the sacred treasures of the temple; but as we esteem these books of the Maccabees no part of divine writ, we leave the proper defence of them to those who have received them as canonical, and shall only add, ⁿ with the learned Huetius, upon this subject, — That, how improbable soever these accounts may be thought by some, they are not destitute of examples of the like nature in several Heathen histories; that, in the battle which the Romans had with the Latins, at the lake Regillus, Castor and Pollux were seen mounted on horseback in the Roman army, and, when the victory was wavering, they restored the fight, and gained the field, and carried the news thereof to Rome that very evening; that, when the Romans invaded the Lucani and Brutii, Mars, the great founder of their nation, led their forces to the onset, and assisted them not a little in taking and destroying great numbers of their enemies; and (to name no more) that, at the battle of Marathon, Pan appeared on the side of the Athenians, made great slaughter among the enemy's army, and injected such a terror into them all, as, from that time, has obtained the name of a *panic fear*.

A. M.
3596, &c.
Ant. Chris.
408, &c.
from 1
Macc. i. to
v. 7, 2
Macc. iii. to
x. and from
J. H. H.
lib. 11 c. 7.
to lib. 12.
c. 14.



Now, though there might be a good deal of fiction in these instances, yet, since we find some of the best Roman historians relating them, and so grave an author as Tully (even ^o in some of his most serious pieces) making mention of the first of these as a matter of just credibility, we cannot but suppose, that the common tradition at this time was, that, to the victorious army (especially when it was much inferior in numbers) some celestial and superior beings were always assistant; and, consequently, that the author of the book of the Maccabees, in this respect, wrote nothing but what at that time was the common sense of mankind; nothing, indeed, but what the sense of the royal psalmist, in military matters, authorised him to write: For ^p *let them be turned back, says he, and brought to confusion, that imagine mischief against me; let them be as the dust before the wind, and the angel of the Lord scattering them.*

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H

DISSER-

^m Chap. iii. 25. &c.ⁿ Quæst. Alnetanz, lib. 2. c. 12.^o Tuscul. Quæst. lib. 1. et De nat. Deor. lib. 2.^p Psal.

A. M.
3596, &c.
Ann. Chris.
408, &c.
from 1
Macc. i. 10

vi. 7. 3 2
Macc. iii. 20
x. and from
Joh. Hist
lib. 11 c. 7
to lib. 12.
c. 14

DISSERTATION III.

Of the Jewish Sanhedrim.

An historical
account
of the various
forms
of the Jewish
administration.

BEfore we proceed to examine into this great national council among the Jews, (which we suppose might have its rise much about this period of time,) it may not be improper to take a short view of the sundry forms of civil administration that were previous to it.

The government of the Jewish republic was originally divine: For, ^a if we call a state where the people govern a *democracy*, and that where the nobles govern an *aristocracy*, there is the same reason why this should be stiled a *theocracy*; because God was not only the deity they were bound to worship and adore, but the sovereign, likewise, to whom they were to pay all the honours and rights that were due to supreme majesty. Their republic, however, was not completely settled until God had given them the law from mount Sinai, when the noise and thundrings in which it was delivered were so very terrible, that ^b the people requested of him not to speak any more to them of himself, but to make use of the ministry of Moses as his interpreter.

Thus Moses, by the people's own election, was appointed to the administration of all public affairs; and, in this important office, (as the author of the Hebrews ^c testifies of him, acquitted himself with much faithfulness: But, in a short time, he found, that he had undertaken a work of too much labour and fatigue for any single person to sustain; and therefore, in pursuance of his father-in-law's advice, he made choice of some of the most prudent and understanding men in every tribe, divided them into several classes, and gave them names according to the authority wherewith he invested them, or the number of the persons over whom they were to preside; ^d *He made them captains over thousands, and captains over hundreds, and captains over fifties, and captains over tens, and officers among the tribes.*

But this establishment lasted not long, or at least received some change or addition to it. For, as soon as the

^a Lamy's Introduction, lib. 1. c. 11.

^c Chap. iii. 2.

^d Deut. i. 15.

^b Exod. xx. 19.

the Israelites were arrived at Kibroth-Hattaavah, or the graves of lust, (as the place is called,) but three days journey from mount Sinai, ^a God appointed a body of seventy elders, (to whom he communicated his Spirit, ^b to assist Moses in bearing the burden of the people; and from hence it is, that the defenders of the antiquity of the Sanhedrim date the first institution of that great council. But however this be, it is certain, that this council continued among them all the while that they sojourned in the wilderness; and was, indeed, ^c an institution proper enough for a people in their circumstances, who, being all of one community, could assemble together with ease, and, having no great matters in possession, could have but few processes, and, consequently, might dispense with a lesser number of judges.

A. M.
3396, &c.
Chris.
4. 8, &c.
1. 7. 2
Macc. iii. to
x and from
J. 1. 18.
lib. 1. c. 7.
to lib. 12.
c. 12



Moses, however, foreseeing that this institution would not be sufficient, when once the people were settled in the land of promise, ^d left it as an injunction behind him, that, whoever had the government of the nation should appoint judges and magistrates in every city, to determine the controversies that came before them; but that, when any thing of great moment, or of difficult discussion, should happen, the contending parties should carry their cause ^e to the place which the Lord had chosen, propose it to the priests, and to the judge, that should be in their days; and, upon pain of death, acquiesce in their decision.

Moses was succeeded by Joshua; But his time was spent in making a conquest of the land of Canaan, and, till he had done that, he could not put the order which his predecessor had left him in execution. However, at his first accession to the government, we find that ^f all the people promised the same obedience to him that they had paid to Moses; and that, when himself grew old, ^g he called for the elders of Israel, and for their heads, and for their judges, and for their officers. i. e. all the judges and magistrates, which Moses had enjoined him to establish in the country, for the security of the state and administration of justice.

On this footing Joshua left the civil administration; and thus it stood, till the people revolted from the service of
H 2 God,

^a Numb. xi. 16.
des Hebreux.

ⁱ Joshua i. 16, 17.

^f Calmet's Comment. sur la police
^g Deut. xvi. 18.

^h Deut. xvii. 9.

^k Chap. xxiv. 1.

A. M. 3596, &c. Ant. Chris. 408. &c. from 1 Macc. i. to vi. 7 ; 2 Macc. iii to x. and from Jos. Hist. lib. xi. c. 7. to lib. 12. c. 14.

God, and then all things ran to confusion. In what manner the state was governed, and justice dispensed, during the long succession of judges, it is difficult to determine : But, towards the conclusion of that form of government, we find Samuel ^l going, *from year to year, in a circuit round the country, to judge Israel*, and when himself grew impatient and unable to travel, ^m making his sons judges in his stead ; but their mal-administration occasioned an alteration in the government.

The institution of regal power dissolved that polity which Moses had settled : But though he both foreknew and foretold this change in the constitution, yet we nowhere find him giving any particular directions how kings were to conduct themselves in the administration of the state, and the dispensation of justice ; ⁿ whether it was, that God did not vouchsafe to communicate any fresh discovery to him upon that subject, or whether he might think that the rules which he had already prescribed were not incompatible with the authority and government of kings.

Saul seems to have concerned himself with nothing but military affairs, leaving the priests and judges the same jurisdiction that they had before ; but David, when he came into a peaceable possession of the kingdom, ^o did himself (in causes of great consequence at least,) administer justice to the people. The famous decision between the two mothers, ^p who both laid their claim to the living child, is a plain proof, that, in perplexed and intricate cases, Solomon himself did sometimes the office of a judge ; and when we read of this prince, that he came to ^q Gibeon, *with the captains of thousands and of hundreds, with the judges, and the chief of the fathers*, we may learn from hence, that magistrates of the same kind that Moses had ordained were at this time existing in the kingdom of Israel.

By the revolt of the ten tribes from the house of David to that of Jeroboam, the civil constitution of the Jews suffered very much ; because the avowed purpose of that prince was, to change the religion, and reverse the orders which Moses had instituted : And therefore, from henceforward, we must look only into the kingdom of Judah for

^l 1 Sam. vii. 15, 16. ^m Chap. vii. 1.

Dissert. sur la Police des Hebreux.

^p 1 Kings iii. 16, &c. ^q 2 Chron. i. 2.

ⁿ Calmet's
^o 2 Sam. xv. 2.

for the succession of the true discipline and form of ancient government of the Jews.

When Jehoshaphat formed a design of introducing a reformation both in church and state, he pursued the rule which Moses had given him; for *he set judges in the land, through all the fenced cities*, and in Jerusalem the capital, erected two tribunals; *one composed of priests and Levites, to hear appeals from lesser courts, relating to religious matters; and the other, composed of the chief of the fathers of Israel, to hear such as related to civil.* Nor is their conjecture much amiss, who suppose, that the seventy men, whom *Ezekiel saw in a vision, burning incense to idols, and the five and twenty, who, between the porch and the altar, were worshipping the sun in the east,* are the rather mentioned, because they were men of eminence, and very probably, the judges of civil and ecclesiastical matters.

What kind of judicature prevailed in the time of the captivity, it is difficult to say. From the story of Susannah we may learn, that in these circumstances, the Jews were allowed their own courts and judges, even in Babylon itself; but of what number, order, or authority these judges were, none can tell. It is plain, however, that upon the restoration, Ezra returned with full power from Artaxerxes, *to set magistrates and judges in all the land*, who might punish criminals according to their demerit, either with death, or banishment, imprisonment, or confiscation of goods: And in this condition the Jewish state continued, viz. in the form of an aristocracy, with the high-priest at the head of it, sometimes under the king of Egypt, and sometimes under the king of Syria, for a considerable time after the return from the captivity.

The persecution which Antiochus Epiphanes raised among the Jews, ruined all the œconomy of their government: But Matthias, and his sons, endeavoured to restore *the decayed state of the people* (as it is called) as far as those troublesome times would permit them. Judas Maccabæus, in a general assembly held at Maspha, revived the ancient order, and appointed rulers *over the people, even captains over thousands, over hundreds, over fifties, and over*

^r Chap. xix. 5.

^u Ibid. ver. 16.

iii. 43.

^s Ibid. ver. 8.

^x Ezra vii. 25, 26.

^z Ibid. ver. 55.

^t Ezek. viii. 11.

^y 1 Maccab.

A. M.
3305, &c.
Ant. Christ.
408, &c.
from 1.
Macc. i. to
vi. 7; 2
Macc. iii. to
x and from
Jof. Hist.
10, 11. c. 7.
to lib. 12.
c. 14.



A. M. *over tens*: And when Jonathan, his brother and successor, took upon him both the sovereign and sacerdotal authority, he, nevertheless, governed by the advice of a senate, not excluding the people from some share in their deliberations, as appears by the letters ^a which the Jews, at this time, sent to the Lacedemonians.

Aristobulus, who was the first of the Asmonæan race that took upon him the diadem and title of a king, continued the senate in great authority, but excluded the common people from having any part in the administration; as the kings who succeeded him, endeavoured to confirm their own power, by curtailing that of the senate, till Pompey came, and quite overturned the Jewish state, by subjecting it to the empire, and making Judea a Roman province.

From this short review of the Jewish republic, we may perceive, that its form of government, at different times, has been various; that Moses (with the concurrence of seventy chief magistrates) as God's vicegerent, governed the people in an absolute manner; that under the judges, the state had been sometimes without any ruler at all, independent sometimes, and, at other times, under the jurisdiction of its enemies; that the ancient kings of Judah vouchsafed to administer justice to their subjects, but that towards the decline of the kingdom, its princes affected state, and a despotic power; that from the captivity to the time of the Asmonæans, the government, under the high-priest, was partly aristocratical, and partly popular; and that the Asmonæan kings made it monarchical, till the Romans destroyed it: And so we proceed to consider, in which of these periods the famous council of the Jews, which is usually called their *Sanhedrim*, might have its rise, with some other particulars relating to its authority and proceedings.

When Moses, in conducting the children of Israel through the wilderness, was teased and wearied out (as we say) with the perpetual complaints and murmurings of that people, in the impatience of his soul, he addressed himself to God in these words: ^b *Wherefore hast thou afflicted thy servant, that thou layest the burden of all this people upon me? — I am not able to bear all this people alone, because it is too heavy for me, &c.* Whereupon the Lord said

^a Ibid. xiv. 19.

^b Numb. xi, 11. &c.

said unto him, *Gather unto me seventy men of the elders of Israel, whom thou knowest to be the elders of the people, and officers over them, and bring them unto the tabernacle of the congregation, that they may stand there with thee; and I will come down and talk with thee there; and I will take of the spirit, which is upon thee, and will put it upon them, and they shall bear the burden with thee, that thou bear it not thyself alone* This command Moses took care to put in execution: The elders accordingly, met at the tabernacle of the congregation; and when the Spirit of the Lord rested upon them, they prophesied, and did not cease. These words (as we said before) are held by the generality of the Rabbins, as well as by some Christian writers, to be the true origin of that great Sanhedrim, 'which, from its first institution ' here under Moses, subsisted all along in the Jewish nation, even to the time of their utter dispersion under Vespasian, and had the cognizance of all matters of the 'greatest moment, both civil and ecclesiastical.'

But for the better understanding of the sense and design of them, we may observe, 1st, That Moses does not here speak of the difficulty or multiplicity of business that was laid upon him, but of the perverse temper of the people, always addicted to mutiny and sedition, which he himself alone was not able to withstand. To ease himself of the labour of judging the people in all civil and capital causes, he had, by the advice of his father-in-law, 'appointed a certain number of judges, and it seems not unlikely, that some of these seventy were of the number of these judges, because they are called by God himself, *the elders and officers of the people*. Moses wanted no assistance therefore in the administration of affairs of this nature; but what he wanted, was a sufficient number of persons, of such power and authority among the people, as might restrain them from seditious practices, and awe them into obedience; and for this reason it was, that God, when he made choice of them, gave them the spirit of prophecy, as an evident sign of his having appointed them coadjutors to Moses, in the exercise of his supreme authority, and as a means to procure them the greater reverence and esteem among the people.

2dly, We may observe farther, that it does not appear from the foregoing passage, that this assembly of seventy persons

^c Exod. xviii. 24.

A. M.
3596, &c.
Ant. Chris.
408, &c.
from 1
Macc. i. to
vi. 7; 2
Macc. iii. to
x. and from
Jof. Hist.
lib. 11. c. 7.
to lib. 12.
c. 14.

That it was
only of
temporary
duration.

A. M.
3595, &c.
Ant. Chrif.
478, &c.
from 1
Macc. i. 10
vi 7; 2
Macc. iii 10
x and from
Jof. Hift.
lib ii c 7
to 1 b. 12.
c. 14.

persons was to be perpetuated in the Jewish state, and when any died, others substituted in their room: On the contrary it rather seems to have been an occasional institution, or present expedient for the relief of Moses, that by the addition of other rulers, (all endued with gifts extraordinary, as well as he,) the murmurs and complaints of the people might not fall all upon him, but be diverted (some of them at least) upon others; and that, by the joint influence of so many persons, all possessed with the spirit of government, they might either hinder or appease them. And as this was an institution only for that purpose, there is no reason to believe that it continued any longer than Moses lived; because, if we take a view of the history of succeeding ages, we shall find no footsteps of it.

Was not in
the times of
Joshua or
the judges.

After the death of Moses, we find Joshua ruling the people with an absolute authority; settling the portions of the several tribes in the land of Canaan; dismissing those who had assisted their brethren in the conquest of it; receiving all appeals, redressing all grievances, and acting, in short, as the only governor of the nation, without one word mentioned of any supreme council to control him. After the death of Joshua, God raised up judges, men of courage and wisdom extraordinary, to deliver his people from the oppressions of their enemies, and to attend to the administration of justice among them; and yet we read of no act or decree of this pretended Sanhedrim all this while, ^d which could no more have been omitted in the account of these times, had it been then existing, than the mention of the Roman senate is in any of their historians.

^e *In those days, as the sacred history informs us, there was no king in Israel, but every man did what was right in his own eyes; and* ^f *where then was this venerable assembly, whose authority (according to the Rabbins) was superior to that of princes, to interpose in this time of need? The Jews certainly could never have degenerated into such a state of licentiousness, had there been a court of seventy, or seventy-two elders, chosen out of every tribe, and invested with a supreme authority to punish criminals, and reform abuses; nor can we see what*
reason

^d Le Clerc's Dissert. De Synedrio.

^e Judg. xxi. 25.

^f Sentimens de quelques theologiens sur l'Hist. critique, let. 10.

reason the Levite had to cut in pieces the body of his concubine, abused by the Gibeonites, and to send it to the several tribes, in demand of justice, if there had been such a constant tribunal; as this is represented, to resort to.

A. M.
3526, &c.
Ant. Christ.
408, &c.
from 1

The kings who succeeded the judges, acted in such a manner, as to make us believe, that there was no such thing as a Sanhedrim then in being. ^s They displaced high-priests without opposition; they waged war without advising with any; they made and deposed judges, as they pleased; and in short did every thing that other princes

Macc. i. to
v. 7; 2
Macc. iii. to
x. and from
Jof. Hist.
lib. ii. c. 7.
to lib. 12.
c. 14.

are wont to do, without the Sanhedrim's ever interposing its authority, that we read of, to stop the course of their extravagancies, or curb their exorbitant power. Some of

nor of the
kings;

these kings, we know, were for extinguishing the true worship of God, and establishing idolatry in its stead: Here then was a proper opportunity for this venerable body to step in, by condemning idolatry in some public act of theirs, and opposing the innovations of the court. But of this we hear not one word; neither do we find, that ^h the prophets, who so severely inveighed against the wickedness of the people, ever referred them to the Sanhedrim, or complained, that that court was too remiss or negligent in the punishment of crimes.

If ever mention were to be made of this great council, it would be, one would think, in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah, which were written after the Babylonish captivity, when there was no king in the land, and consequently a fit opportunity for this Sanhedrim to appear; and yet, even here, we find several matters of great moment transacted, such as the reformation of the people's manners, the dissolution of illegal marriages, a stop put to the profanation of the Sabbath, and a covenant of obedience to God, made and signed by the deputies of the priests, Levites, and common people; but not one word of the great Sanhedrim all this while.

nor in the
times of
Ezra and
Nehemiah;

In short, not only the sacred writers, but even Josephus, Philo, Origen, Eusebius, and St Jerom, who were all well versed in the ancient government of the Jews, make no manner of mention of any such body of men in the times that we are now upon; and therefore we cannot but think, that this universal silence, in writers of all kinds, is a very good argument, that this supreme

but of later
institutions:

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I

national

^s Calmet's Dissert. sur la police des Hebreux. ^h Basnage's Hist. lib. 5. c. 1.

A. M.
3596, &c.
Ant. Chrif.
408, &c.
from 1
Macc. i. 10
vi. 7; 2.
Macc. iii. 10
x. and from
Jof. Hift.
lib. 11. c. 7.
to lib. 12.
c. 14

national council did not then fubfift. Its name is confeffedly of Greek derivation; to which purpofe Livyⁱ obferves, that thofe fenators whom the Macedonians intrufted with the adminiftration of their government, were called *Synedri*: And therefore it feems fomewhat incongruous to look into the firft centuries of the Jewish church for the original of a council, whole very name is of later extract.

Before the times of the gofpel, wherein frequent mention is made of this council, we find it in fo great authority, as even to call Herod^k, though then governor of Galilee, upon his trial for fome mifdemeanour: And therefore it is no improbable conjecture, that in the time of the Maccabees, either Judas or Jonathan was the firft inftitutor of it; and the reafon they might have for this inftitution, might be the change which they had made in the nature of the government, for which they wanted the confent of the people, or at leaft of a body that reprefented them, that thereby they might act with more authority: And though, as yet, they did not affume the title of kings, yet they thought it a matter of prudence to have their refolutions ratified by a council.

The Maccabees, who, in all probability, were the firft inftitutors of this council, would hardly exclude themfelves from it; and therefore, we may prefume, that the high-prieft was the fettled prefident, who, for that reafon, was called *Nafi*, or *prince of the Sanhedrim*, and, in his abfence, had a deputy called *Abbeth-din*, or *father of the houfe of judgment*, and a fub-deputy called *Chacam i. e. the wife*; but all the reft had the common name of *elders* or *fenators*.

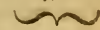
Thefe fenators (which are ufually taken from other inferior courts) were to be fome priefts, and fome laymen, but all perfons of untainted birth, good learning, and profound knowledge in the law, both written and traditional. All eunuchs, ufurers, gamefters, thofe that brought up pigeons to decoy others to their dove-houfes, or made any gain of their fruits in the Sabbatical year, all old men, deformed perfons, and fuch as had no children, (becaufe they were fufpected of being cruel and hard-hearted,) were excluded

ⁱ Pronunciatum quod ad ftatum Macedoniæ pertinebat, fenatores, quos *Synedros* vocant, legandos effe, quorum confilio republica adminiftrator; lib. 45. c. 32. ^k Jewish Antiq. lib.

excluded from this council; and those only who were of mature age, competent fortunes, and comely personages, were admitted to it.

A. M.
3596. &c.
Ant. Chris.
408, &c.
from 1
Macc. i. to
vi. 7.; 2
Macc. iii. to
x and from
Jos. Hist.
lib. ii. c. 7.
to lib. 2.
c. 14.

The room in which this council met, was a rotunda, half of which was built without the temple, and half within. The Nasi, or prince of the council, sat upon a throne elevated above the rest, at the upper end of the room, having his deputy on his right-hand, and his sub-deputy on his left. The senators were ranged in order on each side; and the secretaries who were to record the matters that came before them, were three; whereof one wrote the sentences of those that were absolved, the other had the condemnations under his care, and the third entered into their books the several pleadings of all contending parties.



The vanity and ridiculous pride of the Rabbins appear in nothing more, than in the excessive power which they give to this high-court of judicature. For, according to them, it not only decided such causes as were brought before it, by way of appeal from other inferior courts, but had under its jurisdiction likewise † the king, the high-priest, and prophets. ¹ The king, for instance, if he offended against the law, if he married above eighteen wives, if he kept too many horses, if he hoarded up too much gold or silver, the Sanhedrim had him stripped and whipped in their presence. But whipping, it seems, among the Jews ^m was not so ignominious a thing, but that the king bore it by way of penance, with great patience, and himself made choice of the person that was to exercise this discipline upon him. However this be, it is certain, that all private controversies of difficult discussion, all matters relating to religion, and all important affairs of state, were submitted to the deter-

Its author-
ry;

I 2

mination

† This is directly the opinion of Maimonides, (in Sanhed. per. 2. 3.), but that learned Rabbi was strangely prejudiced in favour of this great council; and though Josephus is of the same opinion, yet to allow such an extent of jurisdiction to this court, so as to inflict corporal punishment upon the persons of their kings, is contrary to the general notions of sovereignty, and the laws of all kingdoms and nations; besides that the Holy Scriptures are absolutely silent in this particular, and nothing can be inferred from them, to countenance such a coercive power; *Lewis's Hebrew Antiq. vol. 1. c. 6.*

¹ Calmet's Dissert. sur la police des Hebreux, ^m Calmet's Dictionary, under the word *Sanhedrim*.

A. M. 3596, &c.
Ant. Chris.
408, &c.
from 1.
Macc. i. to
vi. 7.; 2.
Macc. iii. to
x. and from
Jos. Hist.
lib. 11. c. 7.
to lib. 12.
c. 14.

which, in
some cases
extended to
life and
death;

mination of this august assembly, from whose sentence no appeal could be made, because a demurring to the jurisdiction of their court was punished by death, *i. e.* while the power of life and death was in their hands; but how long this lasted, after that Judea became a Roman province, has been a matter of some dispute among the learned.

Josephus ^a tells us expressly, that the senate and emperors of Rome took no ancient rights from the nations whom they conquered; and by the words of Pilate concerning our Saviour Christ, ^o *Take ye him, and judge him according to your law*, it seems, as though they still retained their power, though perhaps it might be under some limitations.

Upon St Peter's ^p speech before the great council, we find them so exasperated against the apostles, that they began to think of putting them all to death, and might, very probably, have proceeded in their design, had they not been dissuaded from it by the wise advice of Gamaliel. The stoning of St Stephen was not the effect of any hasty judgment of some zealots, but of the regular proceedings of this court. He ^q *was brought before the council*, we read; *false witnesses* accusing him of blasphemy were produced against him; in his own defence, he made a long discourse; but his own defence was not admitted, nor his innocence acknowledged; and therefore they sentenced him to be stoned ^r according to the law.

St Paul himself declares before this very court, that before his conversion to Christianity, ^s *he persecuted those of that way unto death, and received letters from the estates of the elders, or the Sanhedrim, to bring Christians from Damascus to Jerusalem in bonds, in order to be punished*. Tertullus, who in the trial of this apostle, was council for the Sanhedrim, ^t tells Felix, the governor of Judea, that having apprehended the criminal at the bar, they thought to have proceeded against him *according to their law*; but that the chief captain, *Lyfias*, came upon them, and took him out of their hands.

The true reason why Lyfias exerted his power upon this occasion, and took him out of their hands, was, because they

^a Contra Apion. Jewish Antiq. lib. 2. c. 17.
xviii. 31.

^p Acts v. 29. &c.

^o John
Acts vi. 22. &c.

^q Deut. xvii. 7.

^r Acts xxii. 4. &c.

^s Chap.

xxiv. 6. 7.

they had accused him, not only of blasphemy, and profanation of their temple, but of sedition likewise, which was a crime falling more properly under the cognizance of the civil government, and for which Paul was therefore brought before Felix, Festus, and Agrippa. * So that from an examination of these particulars, wherein the power of the Sanhedrim was concerned, we may conclude, that even after the subjection of the Jewish state to the Roman empire, this Sanhedrim had the power of life and death in crimes committed against their own law; but that in matters of sedition, and crimes committed against the civil administration, the Roman governors interposed their authority, and in cases of this nature, took the dispensation of justice out of their hands.

* What formality was observed in bringing a law-suit before the Sanhedrim, Maimonides has in this manner described:—"The business, (says he,) was first to be examined in the inferior courts; but if it could not be decided there, the judges sent to Jerusalem to consult the judgment-chamber, that sat upon the mount of the temple. From this first tribunal they proceeded to that which sat at the temple-gate; and if the matter was not determined there, they came at last to the great council-chamber, which was held in one of the apartments belonging to the temple; and this last council determined with so much justice and authority, that there were no division seen, during all the time that the second temple lasted." And what caution was taken, in passing the sentence of death upon criminals, by the same tribunal, the Jewish doctors (if we will believe them) have thus informed us.—"After the witnesses were heard, and the matter in question decided, the judge put off the sentence till next morning. Hereupon the Sanhedrim went home, eat but little, drank no wine, and then met again, two by two, in order to weigh all the particulars of the trial. The next morning, he that had given his opinion for condemning of the criminal, had power to revoke it; but he who had once given it for absolving him, could not alter his mind. As soon as the judge had pronounced sentence, the malefactor was conducted to the place of execution, while an herald,

A. M.
3596, &c.
Ant. Christ.
408, &c.
from 1
Macc. i to
vi. 7; 2
Macc. iii to
x and from
Jof. Hist.
lib. ii. c. 7.
to lib. 12.
c. 24.

* *Vid.* Beaufobre et Lenfant's Preface Generale sur le Nov. Test.

* Basnage's History of the Jews, lib. 5. c. 2.

A M. 3596, &c. Ant. Chris. 408, &c from 1 Macc. i. to v. 7: 2 Macc. iii. to x. and from Jos. Hist. lib. i. c. 7. to lib. 12. c. 14.

“ rald, on horseback, proclaimed, as he went along, ‘ Such an one is condemned for such a crime; but if any body can alledge any thing in his behalf, let him speak.’ If it happened that any one came to the gate of the court, the door-keeper made a sign to the herald to bring back the malefactor, while two judges were appointed to receive what his friend had to say in his favour, and to consider whether there was any thing material in it.”

These formalities are indeed related in the Mishnah; but it is much to be questioned, whether they were not invented since, on purpose to recommend the justice and equity of the ancient Jewish tribunals. For, besides that no other nation did ever yet observe such favourable proceedings, in relation to those that were found guilty, there is not the least mention of any thing of this kind in the sacred history; and in the Talmud itself we meet with maxims and matter of fact quite contrary to it. For^v therein we are told, that though a prisoner declare upon oath, at the place of execution, that he was innocent, and in confirmation of this the false witnesses recanted; yet the judges took no notice of their retraction, but only said, “ Let the false witnesses perish; but a judge cannot recall his sentence, when once it is pronounced.”

Inference
from the
whole.

Upon the whole therefore we may observe, that what the Jewish doctors tell us of the origin and succession the authority and proceedings of their Sanhedrim, is in a great measure fabulous; that the council of seventy men, which God instituted in the wilderness, was designed only to serve a particular purpose, and was therefore of short continuance in the Jewish state; that from the time of Joshua, till after the return from the Babylonish captivity, there are no footsteps to be found, either in sacred or profane history, of such an assembly, as the Rabbins represent their Sanhedrim to have been; but that in the times of the Maccabees, we read of the senate of the nation, which, under the Asmonæum princes, grew into great power, and in the days of our Saviour’s ministry, had matters of the highest consequence committed to their determination; till in the final destruction of Jerusalem, and the dispersion of the Jewish nation, the very name and authority of that senate was entirely lost.

CHAP.

^v Ex Gemera, tit. Sanhed. c. 6. f. 4.

CHAP. IV.

From the Death of Antiochus Epiphanes, to that of John Hyrcanus.

THE HISTORY.

AFTER the death of Antiochus Epiphanes^a, his son Antiochus Eupator, a minor, nine years old, succeeded in the throne of Syria. His father, upon his death-bed, had constituted Philip, one of his chief favourites, regent of the kingdom, during the minority of his son, and had delivered to him his crown, his signet, and other ensigns of royalty, giving him strict charge to educate him in such a manner as would qualify him to reign well; but Philip when he came to Antioch, found his office usurped by another. For Lyfias, who in the king's absence was left governor in chief, hearing of the death of Epiphanes, took Antiochus his son, who was then under his care, and, having placed him on the throne, assumed to himself the tuition of his person, and the government of his kingdom, without any manner of regard to the will and appointment of the late king: And Philip, finding himself too weak at present to contest it with him, fled into Egypt, in hopes of procuring some assistance there, which would enable him at one time or other to make good his claim.

^b Not long after the death of Epiphanes, Judas Macabæus, hearing of the confederacy which the neighbouring nations were engaged in, viz. to destroy and extirpate the whole race of Israel, and that they had already begun to cut off as many as were within their power, ^c marched first against the Idumæans, who were the forwardest in the conspiracy, and having fallen into that part of their country which was called *Acrabatene* †, he there slew twenty thousand of them. He next fell upon ^d the children,

A. M.
3941, &c.
Ant. Chris.
163, &c.
from 1
Macc. v. i.
2 Macc. 2.
11. and Jos.
lib. 12.
c. 14. to the
end of and
2 Macc.
and of Jos.
lib. 13.
c. 19.

Upon the death of Epiphanes, Antiochus Eupator, a minor, succeeds him, and is kept under the tuition of Lyfias.

Judas Macabæus, and his brother Jonathan, their noble acts.

^a 1 Macc. vi. 17. 2 Macc. x. 10, 11. Joseph. Antiq. lib. 12. c. 14. ^b 1 Macc. v. 1. &c. ^c 2 Macc. x. 14, 15.

† It is a canton of Judea, upon the frontiers of Idumæa, towards the southern extremity of the Dead-sea,

^d 1 Macc. v. 4, 5.

A. M. 3841, &c. Ant. Chris. 163, &c. from 1 Macc. v. 1. 2 Macc. x. 11 and Jos. lib. 2. c. 14 to the end of 1 and 2 Macc. and of Jos. lib. 3. c. 19.

children of Bean *, another tribe of these Idumæans, and having vanquished them in the field, pursued them to their fortresses, which he besieged, took, and therein slew twenty thousand more: He then passed over the Jordan into the land of the Ammonites, wherein he defeated them in several engagements; slew great numbers of them; took Jahazah †, and its appendant villages; and after his return to Judea, when Timotheus, the governor in those parts, pretended to follow him with a numerous army, he fell upon him, and overthrew him with a great slaughter, so that himself was forced to fly to Gazara, a city in the tribe of Ephraim, where his brother Chereos was governor: But Judas, pursuing him thither, beset the place, took it in five days, and there slew Chereas, Timotheus, and Apollophanes, another great captain of the Syrian forces.

In the mean time, the Heathen nations about Galaad had fallen upon the Jews that dwelt in the land of Tob, which lay on the east of Gilead; had slain to the number of a thousand men; taken their goods for a spoil; and carried away their wives and children into captivity: Whereupon most of the other Jews inhabiting those parts betook themselves to a strong fortress in Gilead, called *Dathema*, with a resolution to defend themselves. This when the Heathens understood, they drew together, in a great body, under the command of Timotheus, the successor, and (very probably) the son, of the late Timotheus. who was slain at Gazara, in order to besiege them, while the inhabitants of Tyre, Sidon, Ptolemais, and other parts thereabout, were laying their schemes to cut off all the Jews that were in Galilee; so that Judas was sent to, both from Gilead and Galilee, to come to the

* Who these children of Bean were, it is difficult to say. Some think, that this Bean was the name of an ancient king, whose descendents lived in hostility with the children of Israel; but others (with more probability) account it the name of a place; and if in the confines of the Dead-sea there was (as some affirm) a city of this name, without all controversy this was it; *Calmet's Commentary* on 1 Maccab. v. 4.

† This city, which lay beyond the Jordan, was first of all given to the tribe of Gad, and afterwards to the Levites, Josh. xxi. 36. It was situated at the foot of the mountains of Gilead, near the brook Jazah, which forms a rivulet or torrent, that falls into the Jordan.

• 1 Maccab. v. 9.—13.

the succour and assistance of his poor distressed countrymen.

A. M.

3481, &c.

Ant. Chris.

163. &c.

from 1

Macc. v. 1.

2 Macc.

x. 11, and

Jof. lib. 12.

c. 14. to the

end of 1

and 2 Macc.

and of

Jof. lib.

13 c. 19.

† In this critical juncture of affairs he consulted the Sanhedrim, or general council of the nation; and, by their advice, divided his army into three parts. With the first, which consisted of eight thousand men, he, and Jonathan his brother, marched for the relief of the Gilcadites: With the second, consisting of three thousand, Simon, another of his brothers, was sent into Galilee; and the rest were left at Jerusalem, under the command of Joseph, for the defence of the place, and the country adjacent, but with a strict charge from Judas, not to enterprize any thing against the enemy, but to stand wholly upon the defensive, until he and Simon should return again.

* Judas and Jonathan passing the Jordan, and marching into Gilead, had intelligence, that, at Bassora, a town of the Edomites, a great number of Jews were imprisoned, in order to be destroyed, as soon as Dathema was taken: Whereupon, by hasty marches, they came upon the city sooner than was expected, and, having slain all the males, taken their spoils, and freed their brethren, they set it on fire, and so proceeded in their way to Dathema. On the morning, when they arrived, (for they marched all night,) Timotheus and his men had begun to storm the place; but Judas, coming upon them when they little expected so sudden and violent an assault, put them all to the rout, and, in the pursuit, slew eight thousand of them. He thence marched his army from place to place, where he understood that any Jews were oppressed or imprisoned; and having treated them in the same manner as he did Bassora, slain all the males, taken their spoils, and set their cities on fire, he returned to Jerusalem.

While Judas and his brother Jonathan were thus successful in Gilead, the other brother Simon was not idle in Galilee. For he defeated the enemy ^a in several encounters, drove them out of the country, and pursued them, with a great slaughter, to the very gates of Ptolemais: and, being now ready to return, he took along with him all the Jews, men, women, and children, that he could find in those parts, because he thought them too far distant from Jerusalem to be under the eye and protection of their brethren; and, having brought them safe into Judea,

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K

with

† Ibid. ver, 16, 17.
1. &c.

‡ Ibid, ver 21. &c.

^a Ibid. ver.

A. M.
3841, &c.
Ant. Chriſt
163, &c.
from 1

Macc. v. 1.
2 Macc. 8.
11. and
Jof. lib.
11. c. 14.
to the end
of 1 and 2
Macc. and
of Jof. lib.
13. c. 19.

Their bro-
ther Jo-
ſeph's de-
ſeat before
Jamnia.

Judas
makes a
peace with
Antiochus
Eupator.

Burns Jop-
pa and
Jamnia.

with them he repeopled theſe places which had been deſolated by the enemy, during the perſecution of Antiochus Epiphanes.

¹ Joſeph, who, with the remainder of the army, was left in Jeruſalem, hearing of theſe great ſucceſſes in Gilead and Galilee, would needs be doing ſomething; and therefore, contrary to the orders that had been given him, led forth the forces on an ill-projected expedition againſt Jamnia, a ſea-port on the Mediterranean, thinking to take the place: but Gorgias, who commanded in thoſe parts for the King of Syria, fell upon Joſeph's army, put them to flight, and, in the purſuit, ſlew about two thouſand of them; which raſh attempt ended in the confuſion of thoſe that undertook it; for Judas had given contrary orders, and by his wiſe conduct, and undaunted bravery, was every where attended with ſucceſs.

Enraged at theſe ſucceſſes, Lyſias ^k, who was commander in chief of the Syrian forces, having raiſed an army of eighty thouſand men, marched againſt Judas, with all the horſe of the kingdom, and eighty elephants; and coming to Bethzura, thought it neceſſary to take that place in his way; but while he was beſieging it, Judas came upon him, and, having ſlain eleven thouſand foot, and ſixteen hundred horſe, put the reſt of his army to flight: ſo that Lyſias, who with much ado eſcaped to Antioch, growing weary of ſo unprosperous a war, and not knowing where to raiſe freſh recruits, made a peace with Judas and his people, whereby the decree of Antiochus Epiphanes, obliging them to conform to the religion of the Greeks, was reſcinded, and a liberty granted them to live according to their own laws.

This peace was ratified by Antiochus Eupator, but it did not laſt long, ¹ becauſe the governors of the ſeveral neighbouring places did not like it. The people of Joppa were the firſt that broke it, by drowning in the ſea two hundred of the Jews, who lived among them in that city; but Judas ſeverely revenged their cruelty: for, falling upon them by night, he burnt their ſhipping, put all to the ſword that had eſcaped the fire, and then hearing, that the people of Jamnia had but badly treated the Jews, he ſet fire to that haven likewiſe, and burnt all the ſhips in it.

Timotheus was one of the governors that was diſſatisfied with

¹ 1 Maccab. v. 55. &c.
¹ Chap. xii. 2. &c.

^k 2 Maccab. xi. 1. &c.

with the peace; and therefore, when Judas understood that he had drawn all his forces together, ^m to the number of an hundred and twenty thousand foot, and two thousand five hundred horse; and that he was going to give the Jews in Gilead fresh vexations, he marched against him; and, having defeated a strong party of wandering Arabs † in his way, and made peace with them, he first took the city of Caspis †, slew the inhabitants, and destroyed the place; then attacked Caraca, which was garrisoned with ten thousand men, whom he put to the sword; and, at last, coming up with Timotheus, near a place called *Raphon*, on the river Jobboc, he there gave him battle, slew of his army thirty thousand men, and ⁿ took him prisoner; but, upon condition that he should release all the Jews that were captives in any places under his command, he gave him both his life and his liberty. Understanding, however, that a great part of the vanquished army had fled to Carnion, a city in Arabia, he pursued them thither, and having taken the place, slew twenty-five thousand more of Timotheus's forces, that had there taken refuge.

A. M.
3841, &c.
Ant. Christ.
163. &c.
from 1
Macc. v. 1.
2 Macc.
x. 11. and
Jof. lib. 12.
c. 14. to the
end of 1
and 2 Macc.
and of Jof.
lib. 13. c.
9
Vanquishes.
Timotheus
and returns
to Jerusalem in triumph.

In his return to Jerusalem, he took along with him all the Jews, that were in the land of Gilead, for the same reason that Simon had carried them out of the land of Galilee the year before, *viz.* to inhabit and fortify the cities of Judea, which were not sufficiently peopled: ^o But being in his way to pass through Ephron †, a strong city,

K 2

and

^m 1 Maccab. v. 37. &c. 2 Macc. xii. 20.—23.

† These people lived in tents, and stayed in a place no longer than it afforded them provision for themselves and their cattle. They were the descendants of Ishmael, and according to the angel's prediction of them, Gen. xvi. 12. *Their hand was against every man, and every man's hand against them*: for they lived chiefly upon plunder; but as they were a stout and warlike people, and well acquainted with the course of those countries, it was no bad policy in the Jewish general, after he had forced them to sue for peace, and had obliged them to furnish him with a certain quantity of cattle and provisions, to secure their friendship and future services; 2 Maccab. xii. 11.; *Universal History* lib. 2. 11.

† This is the same as Hesbon, in tribe of Reuben.

ⁿ 2 Macc. xi. 24, 25. ^o 1 Maccab. v. 46. &c. 2 Maccab. xii. 27, 28.

† The Scripture makes mention of this city of Ephron, as standing upon the Jordan, only in this place; and therefore it is hard to define its particular situation.

A. M. 3841, &c. Ant. Chris. 163, &c. from 1 Macc. v. 1. 2 Macc. x. 11. and Jos. lib. 12. c. 14. to the end of 1 and 2 Macc. 1 b. 13. c. 19.

and well garrisoned by Lyfias, the people refused to open their gates; whereupon he assaulted the place, and, having taken it by storm, put all the males (to the number of twenty-five thousand persons) to the sword, took their spoils, and razed the city to the ground. After this, re-passing Jordan, and returning to Jerusalem, ^p he and his company went up to the temple, to give God thanks for the great success wherewith he had been pleased to prosper this expedition, and for his singular and wonderful protection of them, in that, notwithstanding all the hazardous enterprises they had been engaged in, they had not so much as lost one man.

This continued series of success gave Judas ^a encouragement to carry the war into the southern parts of Idumæa, where he took and dismantled Hebron, the metropolis thereof: and thence passing into the land of the Philistines, took Azotus, formerly called *Ashdod*; pulled down their heathen altars, burnt their carved images, and spoiled the place; and having done the like to all the other cities of that country, where he prevailed, he led his victorious army, laden with the spoils of their enemies, back again to Judea.

Besieges the
fortress of
Acra, for
Antiochus's
army, and
his brother
Eleazar
kills the
royal ele-
phant.

But, notwithstanding all these successes, the Jews could not call themselves entirely masters of Jerusalem. The fortress of Acra ^r still held out for the King of Syria, and the garrison, consisting of Macedonians and renegade Jews, was very troublesome to such as resorted to the temple. Judas therefore thought it highly necessary to attempt the reduction of the place; and, having got engines ^{*} and machines for that purpose, he soon straitened the garrison. The besieged, however, found means to acquaint King Antiochus with their distress, who promised to relieve them, and, for that end, gathered an army of an hundred and ten thousand foot, twenty thousand horse, thirty-two elephants, with castles on their backs full of archers, and three hundred armed chariots of war. With all this

^p 1 Maccab. v. 54.

^a Ibid. ver. 65.—68

Chap. vi. 19. &c.

^{*} These (in Jeremiah vi. 6.) are rendered in the margin, *engines of shot*, and, without doubt, resembled in some measure, the *balistæ* and *catapultæ* among the Romans, which were used for throwing stones and arrows, and were to them of old instead of mortars and carcases; *Lewis's Jewish Antiq. lib. 6. c. 46.*

this force, Antiochus, marching to the relief of the fortress of Jerusalem, passed through Idumæa, where, in his way, he laid siege to Bethzura, which made a brave defence; for the inhabitants, by bold sallies, so burnt and disordered his engines, that he spent much time about it to no purpose. Judas, all this while, pressed the fortresses of Acra with all his might; but fearing lest the Bethzurians should be forced to submit to the superior strength of the enemy, he left the siege of it, and went to the relief of them.

A. M.
3841, &c.
Ant. Christ.
163, &c.
from 1
Macc. v. 1.
1 Macc. x.
11. and Jos.
lib. 12. c.
14. to the
end of 1
and 2 Macc.
and of Jos.
lib. 13.
c. 19.

^s His intent was to surprise the king's forces; and therefore marching in the night, he fell upon one quarter of the army in the dark; killed four thousand of them; and having put the whole army into confusion, retreated on break of day, without suffering any loss. In the morning, when both sides prepared for an open battle, Judas and his men, with great fierceness, began the onset, and did wonders: For Eleazar ^t, a brother of Judas, observing one particular elephant, which was higher than the rest, * armed with royal harness, and supposing thereby that the king was upon it, (at once both to deliver his country, and gain himself immortal honour,) he made at it with all his might; and having slain every one that stood in his way, got under its belly, and thrust his spear into it, so that the creature fell down dead, but unhappily crushed him to death by its weight in the fall.

At length, after having slain about six hundred of the king's forces, perceiving that they must be overpowered by so great a number, ^u they withdrew from the fight, and made a safe retreat to Jerusalem. Antiochus followed after with one part of his army, but left the other to carry on the siege of Bethzura, which the inhabitants seeing ed.

no

^s 1 Maccab. vi. 32.

^t 2 Maccab. xiii. 15, &c.

* Though elephants have an hide impenetrable almost in every part, except their belly, yet for their greater safety, those that are appointed for the wars, are usually armed and covered all over, as it were with a coat of mail. The kings of India, (according to Q. Curtius, lib. 2.), when they took the field, were drawn by elephants all covered over with gold; and Florus described the elephants made use of in battles, *auro, argento, purpura, et suo ebore fulgentes*, lib. 2. c. 8. harnessed, and set out, much after the fashion of the war-horse in Virgil:

Spumantemque agitabat equum, quem pellis ahenis

In plumam squamis auro concerta tegebat.

Æn. 11.

1 Maccab. vi. 47.

A. M.
3841, &c.
Ant. Chriſt.
163, &c.
from 1
Macc. v. 1.
2 Macc. x.
11. and Joſ.
lib. 12. c.
14. to the
end of 1
and 2 Macc.
and of Joſ.
lib. 13.
c. 19.

no proſpect of relief from their friends, were forced to ſurrender. From Bethzura the king's forces ^x marched to Jeruſalem, where Judas had ſhut himſelf up, and his friends, in the temple. They defended the place with great reſolution, but muſt inevitably have been compelled to ſurrender, had they not been relieved by this lucky and unexpected accident.

In the abſence of the king, and the regent Lyſias, that Philip, whom (as we ſaid before) Antiochus Epiphanes, at his death, conſtituted guardian of his ſon, had made himſelf maſter of Antioch, and taken upon him the government of the Syrian empire. ^y Upon the receipt of this news, Lyſias found it neceſſary to make peace with the Jews, that he might be at liberty to return, and expel the intruder. Accordingly a peace was granted them upon honourable and advantageous terms, and ratified by oath; but when Antiochus came to ſee the ſtrength of the fortifications belonging to the temple, he cauſed them, (contrary to the articles he had ſworn,) to be all pulled down and demolished, and then returned towards Syria, where he found that Philip had ſeized on the imperial city; but by one eaſy battle, wherein Philip was worſted and ſlain, he ſoon recovered the poſſeſſion of it.

Menelaus
the high-
priest's un-
happy end.

^z In this expedition againſt Judea, Menelaus, the high-prieſt, accompanied Antiochus, and was as buſy in offering him his ſervice againſt his own people as any: But falling by ſome means under the diſpleaſure of Lyſias, he was accuſed, and condemned, as the author and fomentor of this Jewiſh war, and accordingly was carried to Berhæa †, a town in Syria, and there caſt headlong into a tower of aſhes;

^x Ibid. ver. 48 &c.
xiii. 23.

^y Ibid. ver. 55. 56. 2 Maccab.

^z Ibid. ver. 3.—8.

† This was one of the puniſhments of the Perſians, whereby great criminals among them were put to death. The manner of it is deſcribed in the 13th chapter of the ſecond book of the Maccabees, to be thus:—An high tower was filled a great way up with aſhes; the criminal being from the top thrown down headlong into them, there had the aſhes by a wheel continually ſtirred up, and raiſed about him, till he was ſtuffed and died. *Such was the death of that wicked man,* (ſays the author of the book above cited,) *that he had not a burial in the earth, and that very juſtly.* But then the reaſon which he gives for this providential judgment upon him is very light and trifling: *Forasmuch as he had committed many ſins about the altar, whoſe fire and aſhes were holy, he received his death in aſhes,* verſe 7. 8.; Prideaux Connection, anno 424.

shes; but after his death, ^a Antiochus conferred the office of high-priest upon one Alcimus, a man altogether as wicked as the other.

All this while Antiochus Eupator held the crown of Syria by an unjust title; For Demetrius, the son of Seleucus Philopater, elder brother to Antiochus Epiphanes, was the legal heir thereof. He, in exchange for his uncle Antiochus, had been sent an hostage to Rome, the very year that his father died; and Antiochus, returning at the very nick of time, was unanimously declared king, in the absence and minority of the rightful heir. But Demetrius being now in the twenty-third year of his age, when his uncle died, and his son Eupator, who was appointed king in his room, ^{*} thought it high time to put in his claim; and accordingly moved the senate of Rome for their assistance in the recovery of his father's kingdom; and as an inducement thereunto, he alledged, that having been bred up in that city from his childhood, "he should always look on Rome as his country, the senators as his fathers, and their sons as his brothers." But the senate having more regard to their own interest, than the right of Demetrius, and judging it more to their advantage to have a boy reign in Syria, (as Eupator then was,) than a man of mature understanding, (as they knew Demetrius to be,) instead of

A. M.
3841, &c.
Ant. chrif.
163, &c.
from 1
Macc. v. 1.
2 Macc. x
11. and Jos.
lib. 12. c.
14 to the
end of 1
and 2 Macc.
and of Jos.
lib. 13. c.
19.

Demetrius
Soter reco-
vers the
kingdom of
Syria, and
puts Eupa-
tor to death.

^a 2 Macc. xiv. 3.; Jewish Antiq. lib. 12. c. 15.

^{*} What excited him the rather to do it at this time, was the murder of Cn. Octavius: For the Roman senate having sent three ambassadors into Syria, whereof Octavius was chief to administer the affairs of the nation, during the minority of the king, these ambassadors, finding that there were more ships in the navy, and more elephants in the army, than the treaty made with Antiochus the Great, after the battle of mount Siphilus, allowed of, caused the ships to be burnt, and the elephants to be slain, that exceeded the number stipulated. This occasioned great murmurings and discontent among the people, and provoked one Leptines to such a degree of indignation, that he fell upon Octavius, as he was anointing himself in the Gymnasium at Laodicea, and there slew him. Eupator and Lysias did all they could to clear themselves from having any hand in this vile act, and to this purpose, sent ambassadors to Rome to inform the senate of their innocence; but the senate, after having heard what the ambassadors had to say, gave them no answer, expressing their resentment by their angry silence: And therefore Demetrius thought this no improper time to move the senate, when he perceived them thus out of humour with Eupator, the usurper of his kingdom; *Prideaux's Con-
nection, anno 162.*

A. M. 3841, &c.
Ant. Chris.
163, &c.
from 1
Macc. v. 1.
2 Macc. x.
11. and Jos.
lib. 12. c.
14. to the
end of 1
and 2 Macc.
and of Jos.
lib. 13.
c. 19.

of asserting his right, to whom it belonged, they confirmed Eupator in the kingdom.

Demetrius being excluded from all hopes of any favour or assistance from the senate, had nothing left to do, but to endeavour to make his escape from Rome, and to risk his fortune in his own country: This he did; ^b and landing at Tripoli in Syria, made it believed, that he was sent by the Roman senate (which would support his pretensions) to take possession of the kingdom. Hereupon Eupator's cause, being in the general opinion given up for lost, every one deserted from him to Demetrius; nay, the very soldiers seized on him, and the regent Lysias, with an intent to deliver them up to this new-comer, as soon as he arrived at Antioch; but he refusing to see them, ordered them both to be put to death, and so, without any farther opposition, became thoroughly settled in the whole kingdom.

Alcimus,
the high-
priest's per-
fidy and
cruelty.

He had not been long so settled, before Alcimus (who on the death of Menelaus, had by Antiochus Eupator been constituted high-priest of the Jews, but was never acknowledged as such, because in the time of persecution he had apostatised) came, and implored his protection against Judas Maccabæus, and his party; accusing them of being enemies to the kings of Syria, fomenters of sedition, and murderers, and persecutors of his most faithful subjects. By this representation Demetrius was so exasperated, that ^c he immediately ordered Bacchides, the governor of Mesopotamia, to march with an army into Judea; and having confirmed Alcimus in the office of high-priest, joined him in the same commission for carrying on the war in Judea.

No sooner were they arrived in Judea, with a considerable body of troops, but the Scribes [†] and doctors of the law, met together, and consulted what they were to do upon this occasion. Very desirous they were to have an high-priest again settled among them, and not at all suspicious that any of the sons of Aaron would do them any wrong; and

^b 1 Maccab. vii. 1. &c.; 2 Maccab. xiv. 1, 2.; Joseph. Antiq. lib. 12. c. 16; Justin, lib 34. c. 3. ^c 1 Maccab. vii. 8.—20.

[†] These, in all probability, were a deputation from the great Sanhedrim, which, at this time, had the government of the nation in their hands; and why Judas, who was at the head of them, did not think proper to accompany them, the reason is pretty obvious. *Calmet's Commentary on 1 Maccab. vii. 12.*

and therefore, upon promise of safe conduct, they waited upon them, in order to bring matters to a peaceable accommodation: But the perfidious Alcimus, having got them in his power, caused sixty of them to be seized, and all put to death, on one day, which made the people more cautious of him for the future.

Bacchides, however, returning to Antioch, put Alcimus in possession of the country, and left him some forces to support him in it. With these the wicked high-priest did much mischief, and committed many murders upon those that were not for him: But as soon as Judas ^d with his men appeared in the field again, he left the country for fear, and returned to the king with fresh accusations against him, and his brothers, who, as long as they were permitted to live, (as he told him,) would never suffer the king's authority to take place, nor any lasting peace to be established in the country. So that, upon this representation, Demetrius ^e sent another army against the Jews, under the command of Nicanor, with strict orders to destroy Judas, disperse his followers, and thoroughly establish Alcimus in the high-priest's office.

A. M.
3847, &c.
Ant. Chris.
63, &c.
from 1
Macc. v. 1.
2 Macc. x.
11. and Jos.
lib. 12. c.
14. to the
end of 1
and 2 Macc.
and of Jos.
lib. 13.
c. 19.
Judas expels him
the country, and
quite destroys Ni-
canor and
his army,
for which
the Jews
keep an
annual fe-
stival.

Nicanor was not insensible of the courage and conduct of Judas; and therefore, loath to come to an engagement with him, he endeavoured to compose matters by a treaty, and accordingly entered into articles of peace with him: But the high-priest, ^f not liking the peace, because his interest (as he imagined) was not sufficiently secured in it, went, the third time to the king, and so possessed him against it, that he refused to ratify what was agreed, and sent his positive commands to Nicanor, to go on with the war, and not cease prosecuting it, until he had either slain Judas, or taken him prisoner, and sent him bound to Antioch. Upon these instructions, Nicanor being obliged, though much against his will, to alter his conduct, marched his army up to Jerusalem, and designing, by craft and treachery, to get Judas into his power, ^g invited him to a conference, which the other, upon presumption of the depending peace, readily complied with, and came to the place appointed: But when he found that an ambush was laid for his apprehension, he fled from his presence, and so began the war afresh. This war was carried on with

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L

various

^d 1 Maccab. vii. 23, 24. ^e Ibid. ver. 26.—29. 2 Maccab. xiv. 12.—15. ^f Ibid. ver. 26.—29. ^g Chap. vii. 27.—31.

A. M. 3841. &c. various successes for some time, and with some particular
 Ant. Chris. 163, &c. cruelties on Nicanor's side *, but at length, coming to a
 from 1 decisive battle near a village called *Bethoron*, Nicanor was
 Macc. . 1. slain in the first onset, which the rest of the army perceiv-
 2 Macc. X. ing, cast away their arms, and fled; so that, what with
 71. and Jos. Judas's pursuing them, and the country rising upon them
 lib. 12. c. as they endeavoured to escape, not one of the whole army
 14. to the (which consisted of five and thirty thousand men) was left
 end of 1 to carry home the tidings of their overthrow.

and 2 Macc. After the pursuit was ended, the victorious army re-
 and of Jos. turning to the field of battle, took the spoils of the slain;
 lib. 13. and having found Nicanor's body among the dead, they
 c. 19. cut off his head, and his right-hand, which he stretched
 out so proudly in his threatenings against the temple, and
 hanged them up upon one of the towers of Jerusalem. A
 general joy overspread the whole city upon this occasion,
 and in commemoration of so great a deliverance, it was
 ordained, that the thirteenth day of their month Adar,
 (which answers in part to our February,) the day whereon
 this victory was obtained, should be ever after observed as
 an anniversary day of solemn thanksgiving; and so it is
 kept even to this present time, under the name of the day
 of Nicanor.

Judas
 makes a
 league with
 the Ro-
 mans, but
 is overcome
 by a much
 superior
 force and
 slain.

^h Judas having now some respite after this victory,
 was thinking of making a league with the Romans.
 He had heard much talk of their power, prowess, and
 policy; and was therefore desirous of making an alliance
 with

* One instance of this kind was practised upon Razis, an e-
 minent and honourable senator of the Jewish Sanhedrim, who
 had not only persevered in his religion through the worst of
 times, but upon all occasions been very munificent to the peo-
 ple. Him Nicanor was resolved to cut off, the rather, because
 he thought it would be an act of high displeasure to the Jews;
 and therefore sent a party to seize him. Razis was, at this time,
 at a castle of his which he had in the country, where he de-
 fended himself against them for some time with great valour;
 but at length finding that he could hold out no longer, he
 fell upon his sword. The wound however was not mortal, and
 therefore he threw himself headlong over the battlements of
 the tower whereon he fought: but finding himself still alive,
 he thrust his hand into his wound, and pulling out his bowels,
 cast them upon the assailants, and so died: 2 Maccab. xiv. 46.

^h 2 Maccab. viii.; Jewish Antiq. lib. 12. c. 17.

* with them, in hopes of receiving thereby some protection and relief against the oppressions of the Syrians. To this purpose he sent Jason and Eupolemus, men of sufficiency for such an embassy, to Rome, who were kindly received by the senate, and from them obtained a decree, acknowledging the Jews for friends and allies to the Romans, a league of mutual-defence between them, and a letter to Demetrius, requiring him, upon the peril of having war denounced against him, to desist from giving the Jews any farther molestation: But before the return of these ambassadors Judas was dead.

i For Demetrius, having received an account of the defeat and death of Nicanor, sent Bacchides (with Alcimus) the second time into Judea, at the head of a very numerous army, made up of the prime forces, and flower of his militia. Judas, at their coming, had no more than three thousand men to oppose them; and these were so terrified with the strength and number of the enemy, that they deserted their general, all to eight hundred men. However, with these few, he resolved to try his fortune; and when his soldiers advised him to treat, and wait for a supply; 'God forbid,' says he, 'that the sun should ever see me turn my back to my enemies. If providence has ordained that we should die, let us die manfully, fighting for our brethren; and let us never stain the honour of our former valorous deeds by an ignominious flight.' And so animating them by his own example, he charged and broke the right wing, where Bacchides commanded in person, and pursued them as far as the mountains of Azotus; but not having forces enough to keep the left wing in play, he was followed and encompassed. The action was very hot and obstinate: The Jews sold their lives at a dear rate: Their general did every valiant thing that man could do; till, being overpowered by numbers, he was slain, and his men, thus deprived of their heroic leader, were forced to fly.

L 2

Thus

* Josephus takes notice, that this was the very first treaty that ever the Jews made with the Romans, which is very probable from the manner in which the author of the first book of Maccabees prefaces his account of it; for there it appears, that the Jews, till this time, had very little knowledge of the Roman state; *Jos. Antiq. lib. 12. c. 17.* and *1 Maccab. viii. 1.*
i *1 Maccab. ix. 1. &c.*

A. M.
3841, &c.
Ant. Christ.
163, &c.
from 1,
Macc v. 1,
2 Macc. x.
11, and Jos.
lib. 12, c.
14, to the
end of 1
and 2 Macc.
and of Jos.
lib. 13.
c. 19.

M. A.
3841, &c.
Ant. Chrif.
163, &c.
from 1
Macc. v. 1
2 Macc. x.
11. and
Jof. lib. 2
c. 14 to the
end of 1
and 2 Macc.
and of Jof.
lib. 13.
c. 19.

Jonathan
fucceeds his
brethren in
the com-
mand of
the Jewish
forces,
makes a
brave ftand
and after-
wards a
peace with
Bacchides.

Thus fell the great Judas Maccabæus, the reftorer and preferver of the true worfhip of God, and the reliever and protector of his diftrefsed countrymen, while he lived. His two brothers, Simon and Jonathan, took up his dead body, and conveying it to the city of Modin, they there buried it, in the fepulchre of his anceftors, with all the funeral honour that was due to the memory of fo brave a man, and fo excellent a commander.

After the death of Judas, Bacchides made himfelf mafter of the country, and ufed all the friends and adherents to the Maccabees, where-ever he found them, with the utmoft barbarity; ^k fo that Jonathan was in a manner neceffitated to take upon him the command in the room of his brother Judas, and to become the captain of all thofe who had preferved their integrity. To this purpofe, taking with him his brother Simon, and thofe that had reforted to him, he retired into the wildernefs of Tekoa, and there encamped, with a morafs on one fide, and the river Jordan on the other, fo that they could not eafily be come at. But Bacchides ^l marching after them, and having made himfelf mafter of the pafs that led to their encampment, affaulted them in it on the Sabbath-day, expecting to meet with no refiftance. Jonathan, however, re-minding his men of the determination that was made in this cafe in the time of his father Mattathias, encouraged them to difpute it bravely; which accordingly they did, even till they had flain about a thoufand of the affailants: But then, finding that they fhould be overpowered with numbers, they caft themfelves into the river, and, by swimming over to the other fide, made their efcape.

Bacchides thought it not proper to purfue them any farther, but rather to go back to Jerufalem; where, having fortified mount Acra, and the neighbouring towns, and put garrifons in them, he took hoftages for the fidelity of the inhabitants, and fo returned to Syria *: But, before he departed, Alcimus, the great troubler of Ifrael, and whom

^k 1 Maccab. ix 28.—33. ^l Ibid. ver. 43.—53.

* It is moft likely, that Demetrius had, by this time, received the letters which were fent to him by the Romans in behalf of the Jews, and thereupon gave Bacchides orders to ceafe his vexations of that people; and that, in obedience to thefe orders, Bacchides took occafion, on the death of Alcimus, to leave the country; *Prideaux's Connection, anno 160.*

whom he had, not long before, settled in the high priesthood, was smitten with a palsy, whereof he suddenly died; so that the land had rest for two years, and Jonathan an opportunity of bringing his affairs to some better settlement in Judea.

A. M.
384, &c.
Ant. Chris.
163, &c.
from 1
Macc. v. 1.
2 Macc. x.
11. and Jos.
lib. 12.
c. 14. to the
and of 1
and 2 Macc.
and of Jos.
lib. 13.
c. 19.

^m The adverse party, however, was not long easy; but, at the end of two years, prevailed with Bacchides to return with his army into Judea, proposing to seize Jonathan, and all his abettors, as soon as he was arrived with his forces to support the enterprize: But when Jonathan had intelligence of this, he laid hold on fifty of the principal conspirators, and put them to death, which quelled all the rest. Being sensible, however, that he could not stand against so great a force as Bacchides had brought against him, he retired to Bethbasi, a place strongly situate in the wilderness, and here he purposed to make a stand against the enemy.

Bacchides, as soon as he arrived in Judea, went after Jonathan; but, upon his approach, Jonathan left Simon his brother with one part of the forces to defend the place, whilst himself, with the other part, took the field to harass the enemy abroad: In which capacities they both acted so well, Jonathan, by cutting off several of their parties, and now and then falling upon the outskirts of their army employed in the siege; and Simon, by making frequent sallies upon them, and burning the engines they had brought against the place; that Bacchides, ⁿ growing weary of this undertaking, and not a little enraged at those who were the occasion of his return and disgrace, put several of them to death. This opportunity Jonathan laid hold on, and therefore sent messengers to him, to desire an accommodation, which Bacchides readily came into, so that a peace was concluded. The prisoners whom he had in his custody were all restored, and himself took an oath, never to molest the Jews any more: Which accordingly he fulfilled; for as soon as the peace was ratified on both sides he went away, and never more returned into the country.

When the wars were thus happily ended, Jonathan retired to Michmash, a town about nine miles distance to the north of Jerusalem, where he governed the people according

^m 1 Maccab. ix. 58.—61. ⁿ Ibid. ix. 69.—73.
Joseph. Antiq. lib. 12. c. 1. and 2.

A. M. 3841, &c.
Ant. Christ.
163, &c.
from 1
Macc. v. 1.
2 Macc. 2.
11. and Jos.
lib. 12.

c. 14 to the
end of 1 and
2 Macc.
and of Jos.
lib. 13.
c. 19.

~~~~~  
Balas (who  
took upon  
him the  
name of A-  
lexander)  
usurps the  
kingdom of  
Syria, and  
is joined by  
Jonathan.

according to law; cut off all those that had apostatised from him; and, as far as in him lay, reformed all abuses, both in church and state; repairing the city of Jerusalem; fortifying it on every side, and causing the wall, round the mount of the temple, which had been pulled down, to be rebuilt.

At this time Alexander, (for that was the name which he assumed,) pretending to be the son of Antiochus Epiphanes \*, laid claim to the Syrian monarchy; and being well supported by foreign powers, seized Ptolemais, a city of Palestine, and was making preparations to drive Demetrius out of the throne. On this occasion the two rival princes did both make their court to Jonathan, as thinking him a good ally: Demetrius ° sent him letters, constituting him his general in Judea, with full authority to raise forces, and to provide them with arms to come to his assistance, and commanding, at the same time, that the hostages, which were in the fortrefs of Jerusalem, should be delivered

\* In the reign of Antiochus Epiphanes, one Heraclides was his treasurer in the province of Babylon, while his brother Timarchus, another favourite of the king's, was governor of it; but on the coming of Demetrius to the crown, they were both found guilty of great misdemeanors, for which Timarchus was put to death; but Heraclides made his escape out of the kingdom, and took up his residence at Rhodes. While he was there, Demetrius, having given himself up entirely to luxury and sloth, so neglected the affairs of government, that his subjects justly took a disgust against him, and were ready to enter into any conspiracy to depose him; which Heraclides understanding, in hopes of making a revolution in favour of himself, he contrived this plot.—In the isle of Rhodes there was a youth, of a very mean and obscure condition, called *Balas*, but, in other respects, every way fit for his purpose. Him he prevailed with to pass for the son of Antiochus Epiphanes; and having thoroughly instructed him how to act his part, he carried him to Rome, where, by his craft and earnest solicitations, he not only prevailed with the senate to own him, but procured a decree from them likewise, permitting him to recover the kingdom of Syria out of the hands of Demetrius, and promising their assistance in doing it. By virtue of this decree he raised forces, and with them sailing to Ptolemais in Palestine, seized that city; and there, by the name of *Alexander*, son of Antiochus Epiphanes, took upon him to be king of Syria. Great numbers, out of disaffection to Demetrius, flocked to him; so that, at length, Demetrius being defeated and slain, Alexander obtained the full possession of the Syrian empire; *Pri-  
deaux's Connection, anno 152.*

° 1 Maccab. x. 25, &c. Joseph. Antiq. lib. 13. c. 4.

livered to him; which accordingly was done. <sup>p</sup> Alexander, on the other hand, \* having sent him a purple robe and a crown of gold, as ensigns of great dignity, made him a grant of the high-priesthood, and of the honour to be called the king's friend. Demetrius hearing of this, <sup>q</sup> and being resolved to outbid Alexander, made him still more advantageous offers: But the Jews, remembering what a bitter enemy he had been to all those that had adhered to the true interest of their country, and suspecting that these offers proceeded only from the necessity of his affairs, which would certainly be revoked as soon as the storm was blown over, resolved rather to enter into league with Alexander: And therefore Jonathan †, accepting of his grant of the high-priest's office, did, on the feast of tabernacles, which soon ensued, put on the pontifical robe, and officiate as high-priest, after that the place, from the death of Alcimus, had been vacant seven years.

A. M.  
3841, &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
163, &c.  
from 1  
Macc. v. 1.  
2 Macc. x  
11, and Jos.  
lib. 11. c.  
14. to the  
end of 1  
and 2 Macc.  
and of Jos.  
lib. 13.  
c. 19.

Jonathan is  
made high-  
priest, and  
greatly pro-  
moted and  
rewarded  
In by Alexan-  
der.

<sup>p</sup> Ibid. x. 15.—20. Joseph. Antiq. lib. 13. c. 5.

\* The letter which he sent him, together with these, is to this effect: 'King Alexander, to his brother Jonathan, &c. 'Being informed of your power and valour, and that you are 'worthy of friendship, we constitute you high-priest of your 'nation; and it is our pleasure that you should be enrolled in 'the number of the king's friends. To this end we have sent 'you a purple robe, and a golden crown, not doubting of a 'suitable return from you, for our affection and friendship;' Joseph. Antiq. lib. 13. c. 5.

<sup>q</sup> 1 Maccab. x. 25. &c. Joseph. Antiq. lib. 13. c. 5.

† From the time of the return from the Babylonish captivity, the office of high-priest had been in the family of Jozadack, and, in a lineal descent, was transmitted down to Onias, the third of that name. He was supplanted by Jason his brother, as Jason was by his brother Menelaus, and after the death of Menelaus, Alcimus, who was of a different family, was put into the office by the command of the king of Syria. Whether the Asmonæans were of the race of Jozadack, or not, it is no where said; but it is certain that they were of the course of Joarib, (1 Maccab. ii. 1.), which was the first class of the sons of Aaron; and therefore, upon the failure of the former pontifical family, they had the best right to succeed. With this right it was, that Jonathan took the office; and in his family it became settled, and continued for several descents, until the time of Herod, who, from an office of inheritance, changed it into that of arbitrary will and pleasure. Whoever had the power after him, put the high-priests in or out, as they thought fit, till at length the office was extinguished by the destruction of the temple by the Romans; *Prideaux's Connection, anno 253.*

A. M.  
3841, &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
163, &c.  
from 1  
Macc. v. 1.  
2 Macc. x.  
17, and Jos.  
lib. 12 c.  
14. to the  
end of 1  
and 2 Macc.  
and of Jos.  
lib. 13.  
c. 19.

In the mean time, the two contending kings having drawn together all their forces, committed the determination of their cause to a decisive battle, in which Demetrius\* being defeated and slain, and Alexander, by this victory, made master of the whole Syrian empire, † he sent to Ptolemy king of Egypt, demanding his daughter Cleopatra in marriage. To this marriage (which was performed at Ptolemais) Jonathan the high-priest was invited, and was received by both the kings (for Ptolemy was likewise at the nuptials) with great favour, especially by Ptolemy, who, to do him a particular honour, caused him to be clothed in purple, and to take place, near himself, among the first princes of his kingdom; and, besides making him general of all his forces in Judea, gave him an office ‡ of great credit and renown in his palace.

But Alexander himself did not long enjoy this prosperous state. Demetrius<sup>s</sup>, the son of the late Demetrius, resolving to revenge his father's death, and recover his kingdom, came from Crete, (where he and his brother Antiochus had been concealed in the late troubles,) and with an army of mercenaries, landed in Cilicia. It was not long before he gained over to his interest Apollonius ‡ the governor

\* In the first onset, Demetrius's left wing put the opposite wing of the enemy to flight; but as he pursued them too far, (a fault in war which has lost many victories,) by the time that they came back, the right wing, in which Demetrius fought in person, was overborne, and he slain in the rout: For his horse having plunged him into a bog, they who pursued him shot at him there with their arrows, till he died; *Joseph. Antiq. lib. 13. c. 5.*; *Justin. lib. 35. c. 1.*; *Apion, de Syriacis*; and *Polybius lib. 3.*

† 1 Maccab. x. 54. *Joseph. Antiq. lib. 13. c. 7.*

‡ The word *Meridarches*, which we translate a *Duke*, *Grotius* (in his commentary on 1 Maccab. x. 65.) makes to be the *chief sewer*, which, even in the German empire, is an office that one of the electors bears: But (in his commentary on Matth. xix. 28.) he makes it denote the *governor of a province*: And if, in this place, it were so taken, it would better become Jonathan (one would think) to be made governor of some part of the Syrian empire, than to be the regulator of the dishes at the royal table; *Prideaux's Connection, anno 150.*

<sup>s</sup> 1 Maccab. x. 67.; *Joseph. Antiq. lib. 13. c. 8.*; *Justin. lib. 35. c. 2.*

‡ Apollonius was a common name among the Syro Macedonians and Greeks; and, in the history of the Maccabees, we find so many mentioned of that name, that, for the prevention



governor of Cœlo-Syria, who, to oblige Jonathan to quit Alexander's party, and join with Demetrius<sup>c</sup>, marched an army as far as Jamnia, and from thence sent a challenge to Jonathan to leave his fastnesses on the mountains, and come and fight him on the plains.

Provoked at this message, Jonathan marched out with ten thousand men. He first took Joppa, in the sight of Apollonius and his army, and then joining battle, not only vanquished him in the open field, but pursued his broken forces to Azotus. Here was a famous temple of the god Dagon, unto which the Syrians fled for shelter; but Jonathan entering the town, burnt it to the ground, and set the temple on fire; so that the number of those who

A. M.  
3481, &c.  
Ant. Chris.  
163. &c.  
from 1  
Macc. v. 1.  
2 Macc.  
x. 11, and  
Jof. lib. 12.  
c. 14. to the  
end of 1  
and 2 Macc.  
and of  
Jof. lib.  
13 c. 19.

He vanquishes Apollonius's army, and is again rewarded.

were of mistakes, it may not be improper to give some account of the several persons who bore it. The first that we meet with of that name, is Apollonius, the son of Thraseas, 2 Maccab. iii. 5. who was governor of Cœlo-Syria and Phœnicia, under Seleucus Philopater, when Heliodorus came to Jerusalem, to rob the temple. He was chief minister of state to Seleucus; but, on the accession of his brother Antiochus Epiphanes to the crown, he left Syria, and retired to Miletus. He had a son of his own name, that was bred up at Rome, and resided with Demetrius, (the son of Seleucus Philopater) who was then an hostage in that place. When Demetrius recovered the crown of Syria, this Apollonius became his prime favourite, and was made governor of Cœlo-Syria and Phœnicia, the same government which his father held under Seleucus Philopater; and this I take to be the same Apollonius, who, being continued in the same government by Alexander, now revolted from him, to embrace the interest of Demetrius, the son of his old master, and, to engage Jonathan to do the like, marched his forces against him. Another Apollonius is spoken of, 2 Maccab. iv. 21. as the chief minister of Antiochus Epiphanes, who from him was sent as ambassador, first to Rome, and afterwards to Ptolemy Philometor, King of Egypt; and him I take to be the same, that, with a detachment of two and twenty thousand men, was sent to destroy Jerusalem, and build a fortress on mount Acra. There are, besides these, two other persons, in the history of the Maccabees, mentioned under the name of *Apollonius*. The former of these, being governor of Samaria in the time of Antiochus Epiphanes, 1 Maccab. iii. 10. was slain in battle by Judas Maccabæus; and the latter (who is called *the son of Genneus*, 2 Maccab. xii. 2.) being governor of some toparchy in Palestine, under Antiochus Eupator, did then signalize himself by being a great enemy to the Jews; *Prideaux's Connection*, anno 148.

<sup>c</sup> 1 Maccab. x. 9.—77.; Joseph, Antiq. lib. 13. c. 8.

A. M. 3841, &c.  
 An. C. 163, &c.  
 from 1 Macc. v. 1.  
 2 Macc. x. 11. and  
 Jos. lib. 12. c. 14. to the  
 end of 1  
 and 2 Macc.  
 and of Jos. lib. 13. c. 19.

Alexander's plot  
 against his  
 father-in-  
 law, Ptole-  
 my Philo-  
 metor, for  
 which he is  
 vanquished  
 and slain.

were slain in battle, and perished by the flames, amounted to no less than eight thousand men. After this, having treated the neighbouring towns, that belonged to the enemy, in the like manner, he led his victorious army back to Jerusalem, loaded with spoils; whither he had not been long come, before Alexander, hearing of his renowned actions in favour of his cause, <sup>u</sup> sent him a \* buckle of gold, such as none but the royal family were allowed to wear, and, at the same time, made him a present of the city of Ekron, and all the territories thereunto belonging.

<sup>x</sup> When Apollonius, governor of Cælo-Syria, had declared for Demetrius, Alexander called in his father-in-law, Ptolemy Philometor, to his assistance. He marched into Palestine with a great army; and as he passed, in all the cities (which, by Alexander's orders, opened their gates to him) he left a good number of his own soldiers to strengthen the garrisons. But, whether or no this might give some umbrage to Alexander, so it was, that Ptolemy discovered a design, which Ammonius, Alexander's great favourite, had formed, to have him cut off at his coming to Ptolemais; and upon his demanding justice to be done to the traitor, by Alexander's refusing to give him up, he plainly perceived that the king was a party to the treason and thence began to harbour an implacable hatred against him.

He therefore marched his army to Antioch; and, having taken his daughter from Alexander, gave her to his rival Demetrius, and (with her) assurance to restore him to his father's throne. <sup>y</sup> The Antiochians, taking the opportunity of Ptolemy's approach to execute their resentments upon Ammonius, rose in a tumult, and slew him; and then, opening their gates to Ptolemy, were all disposed to make him their king; but he modestly declining that offer, recommended to them the restoration of Demetrius, the true heir: Whereupon Demetrius was received into the city, and placed on the throne of his ancestors.

Alexander,

<sup>u</sup> 1 Maccab. x. 88, 89.

\* The golden buckle (which was worn upon the shoulder) was a very singular mark of distinction both among the Greeks and the Persians, (from whom the Macedonians took it,) and was generally made the reward of great and gallant actions in war; *Calmet's Commentary* on 1 Maccab. x. 89.

<sup>x</sup> 1 Maccab. xi. 1.—5.; Joseph. Antiq. lib. 13. c. 8.

<sup>y</sup> Ibid. xi. 13.; Joseph. ibid.

Alexander, who was then in Cicilia, hearing of this, came with all his forces towards Antioch, waſting the country with fire and ſword; but when Ptolemy, with his new ſon-in-law, met him, and gave him battle, his army was routed, and himſelf was forced to fly to Arabia, where Zabdiel, king of the country, cut off his head, and ſent it as a preſent to Ptolemy, who was not a little pleaſed with the ſight of it. His joys however did not laſt long; for, in five days time, he died of the wounds he had received in battle, leaving Demetrius in quiet poſſeſſion of his father's kingdom, which he having recovered by virtue of this victory, did thenceforeward take upon him the name of *Nicanor*, i. e. *Conqueror*.

During theſe tranſactions, Jonathan <sup>2</sup> laid ſiege to the fortrefs at Jeruſalem; but ſome of the garrifon, eſcaping by night, came and acquainted Demetrius with it, who thereupon marched from Antioch with an army to relieve it. But, coming to Ptolemais, he ſtopped there and ſent for Jonathan to appear before him, and answer to ſuch accuſations as were preferred againſt him. Jonathan went thither, though he ordered the ſiege ſtill to go on; and, when he came to Demetrius, by his rich preſents and wiſe management, he ſo mollified the king, and inſinuated himſelf into his good graces, that he not only confirmed him in the poſſeſſion of what he had, but honoured him likewiſe with many new favours, and, upon the payment of three hundred talents, agreed to exempt from all tolls, taxes, and tributes, all the places that were under his government.

Jonathan, upon his return to Jeruſalem, preſſed the ſiege of the fortrefs very cloſely; but finding little or no ſucceſs therein, he ſent an embaſſy <sup>a</sup> to Demetrius, deſiring him to withdraw the garrifon, which he could not expel. This, and much more, Demetrius promiſed to do for him, if he would but ſend him ſome forces to reduce the inhabitants of Antioch, who, incenſed by his cruelty and oppreſſion, had taken up arms againſt him. Jonathan immediately diſpatched three thouſand choice men to his aid, who, coming to Antioch, when the people had beſet the place with an intent to murder the tyrant, (as they called him,) fell on with fire and ſword, and having burnt a great part of the city, and ſlain of the inhabitants

M 2

about

<sup>2</sup> 1 Maccab. xi. 20. 47.; Joſeph. Antiq. lib. 17. c. 8.

<sup>a</sup> Ibid. xi. 47.—52.; Joſeph. Antiq. lib. 13. c. 9.

A. M.  
3841. &c.  
Ant. Chriſt.  
163. &c.  
from 1  
Macc. v. 1.  
1 Macc. x.  
11. and Joſ.  
lib. 12. c.  
14. to the  
end of 1  
and 2 Macc.  
and of Joſ.  
lib. 13.  
c. 19.

Jonathan  
pacifies De-  
metrius,  
and helps  
him with  
his forces  
to reduce  
Antioch,  
but is bad-  
ly rewarded  
for it.



A. M. about an hundred thousand persons, obliged the rest to  
 3841, &c. have recourse to the king's clemency, and pray for peace.  
 Ant. Christ. But all this service availed nothing. Demetrius <sup>b</sup> seeing  
 163, &c. this storm overpast, forgot the bargains which he had made  
 from 1 with Jonathan at Ptolemais; and (though he had received  
 Macc. v. 1. the three hundred talents in lieu of them) threatened him  
 2 Macc. x. with military execution, unless he sent the taxes and tri-  
 11. and Jos. bute which were usually paid by his predecessors: and  
 lib. 12. c. would certainly have done all that he had threatened, had  
 14. to the not Tryphon found out another employ for his arms.  
 end of 1  
 and 2 Macc.  
 and of Jos.  
 lib. 13.

c. 19. This Tryphon had formerly served Alexander, as go-  
 vernor of Antioch, but, in the present king's reign, was  
 laid aside. Observing, however, that the cruelty and ty-  
 ranny, which was every-where practised, the disbanding  
 the Syrian soldiers, and retaining only foreigners in pay,  
 together with many more grievances, which the people la-  
 boured under, had quite alienated their hearts, and made  
 them ready for a general defection, he thought this no un-  
 fit opportunity to put in practice his long concerted scheme  
 of advancing himself to the crown of Syria.

To this purpose he goes into Arabia <sup>c</sup>; gets Antio-  
 chus, son of the late Alexander, into his hands; brings  
 him into Syria, claims the kingdom for him; and, to  
 support this claim, all the soldiers whom Demetrius had  
 disbanded, and several others, whom his ill conduct had  
 made his enemies, flock in great numbers to the pretender.  
 With these Tryphon marches against Demetrius,  
 vanquishes him in battle, forces him into Seleucia, and,  
 having taken possession of Antioch, places Antiochus up-  
 on the throne, and gives him the name of *Theos*, or the  
*Divine*.

The ill return which Demetrius made Jonathan, was,  
 doubtless, the chief reason for his declaring for this  
 new king; <sup>d</sup> who, by the advice of those that were  
 about him; took care, not only to confirm him in the  
 office of high-priest, and in all his other places and  
 dignities, but to make likewise his brother Simon com-  
 mander of all his forces, from Tyre to the frontiers of  
 Egypt. Upon this defection from him, Demetrius sent  
 all the troops that were left in Cælo-Syria, and Phœnicia;  
 to

<sup>b</sup> Joseph. Antiq. xi. 53.  
 ibid. and Amon, de Syriacis.  
 Joseph. ibid.

<sup>c</sup> Ibid. xi. 54.—56.; Joseph.  
<sup>d</sup> Ibid. xi. 57.—59.; Jo-  
 seph. ibid.

Tryphon  
 overcomes  
 Demetrius,  
 and mur-  
 ders Jona-  
 than and  
 his two  
 sons, toge-  
 ther with  
 the young  
 king whom  
 he had let  
 up.

to chastise him for it: But he not only repulsed them twice, but took Gaza likewise, and all the country as far as Damascus; while Simon<sup>e</sup>, whom he left in Judea, penetrating into the land of the Philistines, took Joppa, and placed a strong garrison in it. Tryphon, who had no other aim in getting young Antiochus into his hands, than to serve his wicked purposes, knew very well, that, as long as Jonathan continued in his interest, it would be in vain for him to attempt the crown; and<sup>f</sup> therefore, having prevailed with him to dismiss his army, and to accompany him to Ptolemais, (under pretence of putting that place into his hands,) with no more than a thousand men, they were no sooner entered, but the garrison, having shut the gates upon them, seized Jonathan, and put his men to the sword.

Having thus circumvented Jonathan, he took him along with him, and marched his army into Judea: But the Jews by this time had chosen Simon his brother for their commander, and were ready to give him a warm reception. Not finding himself, therefore, able to engage them, he sent Simon this deceitful message, —<sup>e</sup> ‘That he had seized Jonathan only because he owed an hundred talents to the king; but that, in case he would send the money, and Jonathan’s two sons, to be hostages for their father’s fidelity, he would set him again at liberty.’ Simon soon saw through this deceit; but he complied with the traitor’s demand, for fear it should be said that he had not done all that lay in his power to save his brother’s life; and accordingly sent the money, and two young men. But when the villain had got them in his power he put both them and their father to death; and, thinking that he had now nothing to obstruct his main design, he caused Antiochus to be murdered privately; and then, assuming the crown, declared himself King of Syria in his stead.

When Simon heard of his brother’s death, and that he was buried at Bascama in the land of Gilead,<sup>h</sup> he sent and fetch’d his dead body from thence; and, having buried it with great funeral solemnity in his father’s sepulchre

<sup>e</sup> 1 Maccab. xi. 64. Joseph. Antiq. lib. 13. c. 9. <sup>f</sup> Ibid. xii. 39.—52. <sup>g</sup> Ibid. xiii. 12.—19. Joseph. Antiq. lib. 13. c. 11. <sup>h</sup> Ibid. xiii. 25.—30. Joseph. ibid.

A. M.  
3841, &c.  
Ant. Chris  
163, &c.  
from 1

1 Macc. v. 1.  
2 Macc. x.  
11. and Jos.  
lib. 12. c.  
14. to the  
end of 1  
and 2 Macc  
and of Jos.  
lib. 13.  
c. 19.

pulchre at Modin, he erected over it a stately monument\*, all built of white marble, and curiously wrought and polished.

<sup>i</sup> Simon, as soon as he was admitted to the government of the land, sent to Demetrius, who was then at Laodicea, a crown of gold, and ambassadors to treat with him about terms of peace and alliance. The king granted to Simon a confirmation of the priesthood and principality, and to the people a release of all taxes, tolls, and tributes, with an oblivion of all past acts of hostility, on condition that they would join with him against the usurper: in virtue of which treaty, Simon, being made sovereign prince of the land, and the land freed from all foreign yoke, the Jews from this time, instead of dating their instruments and contracts by the years of the Syrian kings, (as hitherto they had done,) dated them by the years of Simon and his successors.

Simon, succeeding his brother in the command of the Jewish forces, takes and levels the fortress of Acra.

Having thus obtained the independent sovereignty of the land, <sup>k</sup> he took a progress through it, to inspect what was wanting for its security; repairing the fortifications that were decayed, making new ones where they were wanted, and besieging and taking the places that stood out against him. He had no occasion however to besiege the fortress of Jerusalem, because the wall which his brother Jonathan had built against it had so cut off all communication with the city, that the garrison, being sore distressed for want of provisions, and all other necessaries, was forced to surrender the place; and Simon, wisely considering how much the city of Jerusalem had been infested by that citadel, pulled it down to the ground, that it might no longer be a retreat to sedition and faction; and (to prevent its being

\* This edifice, being erected on an eminence, was seen far off at sea; and, on that coast, was taken notice of as a good sea-mark. Near to the monument Simon placed seven pyramids, two for his father and mother, four for his four brothers, and the seventh for himself, and then encompassed the whole with a stately portico, supported by marble pillars, each of one entire piece, and whereon were engraved ships and arms, and other military ensigns. Josephus tells us, that this whole fabric was standing entire in his days, and looked upon as a very curious and excellent piece of architecture, *Antiq. lib. 13. c. 11.*; and Eusebius mentions it as still in being in his time, which was two hundred years after the time of Josephus: *Prideaux's Connection anno 144.*

<sup>i</sup> 1 Macc. xiii. 34.—42. Jewish Antiq. lib. 13. c. 11.

<sup>k</sup> Ibid. xiv. 7.—33.



ing built at any time) levelled the hill on which it was situated; so that now no eminence was left but the mount of the temple only.

Demetrius \* at this time was prisoner in Parthia, and Cleopatra his queen had shut up herself and her children in Seleucia †; but, fearing to fall into the hands of the traitor Tryphon, and being provoked at her husband's marrying the daughter of Mithridates, king of Parthia, she sent to his brother Antiochus, who still continued in Crete, offering him the crown, and herself in marriage, if he would come and join his interest with hers against Tryphon. This offer he readily accepted of; and, in the beginning of the next year, landed in Syria, with an army of mercenaries, which was soon augmented by a large accession of the usurper's forces, which every day deserted from him: So that, not being able to keep the field, he fled from place to place, till at length, coming to Apamea

A. M.  
3841, &c.  
Ant. christ.  
163, &c.  
from 1  
Macc. v. 1.  
2 Macc. x.  
11 and Jof.  
lib. 12. c.  
114. to the  
end of 1  
and 2 Macc.  
and of Jof.  
lib. 13. c.  
19.

Antiochus.  
Sidetes de-  
poses his  
brother De-  
metrius, but  
has his ar-  
my under  
Cenedebus  
defeated by  
Simon.

\* The reason of Demetrius's being in this condition in this place, by profane historians, is said to be this:—As the Parthians had at this time over-run in a manner all the East, and had made themselves masters of every country from the river Indus to the Euphrates, those who were of the Macedonian race in those parts, not bearing their usurpation and insolence, invited Demetrius, by repeated embassies, to come to their relief, promising him a general revolt from the Parthians, and such assistance of forces against them as would enable him to suppress these usurpers, and recover to his dominions all the provinces of the East. Upon confidence of these promises, he undertook the expedition; and found as soon as he appeared, that the Elymæans, the Persians, and the Bactrians, declared for him. By the assistance of these nations he overthrew the Parthians in several conflicts; but at last, under the shew of a treaty of peace, being drawn into a snare, he was made prisoner, and all his army cut to pieces. The king that reigned in Parthia at this time was Mithridates, the son of Priapatites, who, having thus gotten Demetrius into his power, carried him round the revolted provinces, that, by seeing the prince whom they confided in reduced to this ignominious condition, they might more easily be brought to submit to their former yoke: But, when he had done this, he allowed him a maintenance suitable to the state of a king, and gave him one of his daughters, whose name was *Rhodaguna*, in marriage; *Justin, lib. 41. c. 5. and 6.; Josph. Antiq. lib. 13. c. 9. and 12.; and Orosius, lib. 5. c. 4.*

† It is a city of Syria, situate upon the Mediterranean, near the place where the Orontes discharges itself into that sea.

! *Joseph. Antiq. lib. 13. c. 12.*

A. M. mea \*, his own native city, he was there taken and put to  
 3841, &c. death. This end being put to his usurpation, Antiochus  
 Ant. Chril. became fully possessed of his father's throne; and, being a  
 163. &c. man much addicted to hunting, he had for that reason the  
 from 1 name of *Sidetes*, which, in the Syrian language, signifies  
 Macc. v. 1. the hunter.  
 2 Macc.

x. 11. and Before Antiochus landed in Syria, (to gain Simon over  
 Jos. lib. 11. to his interest,) he wrote him a letter <sup>m</sup>, wherein he made  
 c. 14. to the him many grants, and promised him more; but, as soon  
 end of 1 and 2 Macc. as he was settled in the kingdom, he forgot his promises,  
 and of Jos. and sent an ambassador, demanding him to deliver up Jop-  
 lib. 13. c. pa and Gazara, and other places, or else to pay him a  
 19 thousand talents of silver for them. <sup>n</sup> These conditions  
 were thought too unreasonable to be complied with; and  
 therefore, when Antiochus sent an army under the com-  
 mand of Cendebeus, to enforce them, Simon, though very  
 far advanced in years, with a juvenile courage, prepared  
 to give him a warm reception; and, with his two sons,  
 Judas and John, (who was afterwards called *Hyrcaus*)  
 put his army to flight almost at the first onset, and, in the  
 pursuit, cut off a great number of them: But, to be re-  
 venged of him for this defeat, Antiochus concerted the  
 most abominable measures.

Ptolemy's  
 base and  
 perfidious  
 murder of  
 his father-  
 in law Si-  
 mon, and  
 two of his  
 sons.

Simon had a son-in-law named *Ptolemy*, whom he had  
 appointed governor of the plains of Jericho. <sup>o</sup> This  
 man, who was rich and ambitious, had laid a design  
 (which he communicated to Antiochus) for the usurpa-  
 tion of the government to himself; but this could not well  
 be done without the destruction of Simon and his family.  
 As Simon, therefore, and two of his sons, Judas and  
 Mattathias, were making a progress through the cities of  
 Judah, when they came to Jericho, Ptolemy invited them  
 to an entertainment which he had prepared for them in a  
 castle of his own building: But, while they were drinking  
 and making merry, he caused them, and all that attended  
 them, to be assassinated; and, thinking thereupon to make  
 himself master of the whole land, he sent a party to Ga-  
 zara,

\* It is a city of Syria, lying upon the Orontes, and was  
 built (as is believed) either by Seleucus the first king of Syria,  
 or by his son Antiochus Soter, in honour of Queen Apamea  
 the wife of Seleucus, the mother of Antiochus; *Calmet's Dic-  
 tionary*, under the word.

<sup>m</sup> 1 Macc. xv. 2.—5.

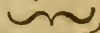
<sup>n</sup> Chap. xv. 30.—36.

<sup>o</sup> 1 Macc. xvi. 14.—22. Joseph. Antiq. lib. 13. c. 14.

zara, where John Hyrcanus \*, Simon's third son, resided, with a design to slay him likewise. But Hyrcanus having had intelligence of what passed at Jericho, was prepared to receive his intended murderers, and having dispatched them, hastened to Jerusalem to secure the city, and the mount of the temple, against those whom the traitor had sent to take possession of both. After this Hyrcanus was declared high-priest and prince of the Jews, in the place of his father Simon, who was greatly † lamented; but what finally became of this execrable villain ‡, we have no manner of account in history.

A. M.  
3841, &c.  
Ant. Chris.  
163, &c.  
from 1  
Macc. v. 1.  
2 Macc. x.  
11. and Jos.  
lib. 12. 6.  
14. to the  
end of 1  
and 2 Macc.  
and of Jos.  
lib. 13.  
c. 19.

Antiochus



\* Why this captain was called *Hyrcanus*, some impute to the victory which he obtained over Hyrcanus, whom the books of the Maccabees, and Josephus, call *Cendebeus*, though others say, that he had this name from a gallant action against the Hyrcanians, perhaps in the expedition wherein he accompanied Alexander Sidetes beyond the Euphrates; *Calmet's Dictionary*, under the word.

† The commendation which the author of the first book of the Maccabees, chap. xiv. 4. &c. bestows upon Simon, is worth our observation; for he therein tells us, that he *fought the good of the nation*, in every thing, *so that his authority always pleased them well*: That during his administration, whilst Syria, and other neighbouring kingdoms were almost destroyed by wars, the Jews lived quietly, *every man under his own vine and fig tree*, enjoying, without fear, the fruits of their labours, and beholding with pleasure the flourishing state of their country; their trade increased by the reduction of Joppa, and other maritime places; their territories enlarged; their armies well disciplined; their towns and fortresses well garrisoned; their religion and liberties secured; their land freed from Heathen enemies, and Jewish apostates; and their friendship courted by all the nations about them, even by the Romans and the Lacedemonians. He observes farther, that this Simon was no less zealous for the service of God, in exterminating apostasy, superstition, idolatry, and every thing else that was contrary to his laws; that he was a great protector of the true Israelites, and a friend to the poor; that he restored the service of the temple to its ancient splendor, and repaired the number of its sacred vessels: So that we need not wonder, if the Jewish Sanhedrim thought no dignity of honour, while he lived, and when he was so basely and barbarously cut off, no grief and lamentation too great for a man of his uncommon merit; *Universal History*, lib. 2. c. 11.

‡ Josephus has something peculiar in his account of this vile miscreant, *viz.* that after he had killed his father-in-law Simon, he seized on his wife, and two of her children, and with them



A. M.  
3841, &c.  
Ant. Chrit.  
163; &c.  
from 1  
Macc. v. 1.  
2 Macc x.  
11. and Jos  
lib. 12. c.  
14 to the  
end of 1  
and 2 Macc.  
and of Jos.  
lib. 13.  
c. 19.

Hyrca-  
nus's  
son, being  
made gene-  
ral, is for-  
ced to sur-  
render to  
Antiochus,  
and attend  
him to the  
Parthian  
war, where  
he and his  
army are  
cut to pie-  
ces.

P Antiochus having received from Ptolemy an account of the death of Simon and his sons, thought that he had now a fair opportunity to reduce Judea again under the Syrian empire; and therefore he immediately marched a large army thither; and having over-run the country, and driven Hyrcanus out of the field, he shut him up and all his forces within the walls of Jerusalem, and there besieged him. The siege was carried on vigorously; and the defence of the place was executed as gallantly: But Hyrcanus being distressed for want of provisions for so vast a number of people as was in the city, was forced to sue for peace, which was granted him upon these terms, that the besieged should deliver up their arms; that Jerusalem should be dismantled; that tribute should be paid to the king for Joppa, and the other towns which were held by the Jews out of Judea; and that, to buy off the fortrefs of Jerusalem from being rebuilt, (which Antiochus much insisted on,) they should pay him five hundred talents\*; three hundred down in hand, and the other two in a reasonable time, for which they were to give hostages.

The betook himself to a certain castle not far from Jerusalem, called *Dagon*; that when Hyrcanus came to besiege it, the villain's custom was, to bring out his mother and brothers, and to whip and torment them, in the sight of all the people, with menaces to cast them headlong from the battlements, unless Hyrcanus withdrew the siege; that when Hyrcanus, out of tenderness to his mother and brothers, was thinking of raising the siege, and suffering the traitor to escape, his mother called aloud to him from the walls, not to regard her, or her children's sufferings, but to proceed in the siege with vigour, that so he might do himself and his family right, in taking a just vengeance upon that execrable monster; that notwithstanding this magnanimous exhortation, he could not bear to see his relations tortured, and therefore delayed the siege, until the sabbatical year came on, wherein the Jews were obliged to rest; so that Ptolemy, by this means, being delivered from the war, and the siege, (after he had slain the mother and brothers of Hyrcanus,) withdrew to Zeno, surnamed *Catyla*, a tyrant who at that time had usurped to himself the government of Philadelphia; *Antiq. lib. 13. c. 15.* But our learned Usher is of opinion, that this whole account of Josephus is fabulous.

P 1 Macc. xvi. 18.; Joseph. Antiq. lib. 13. c. 16.

\* Josephus tells us, that Hyrcanus, to find some money for this, and other occasions of the government, broke up the sepulchre of David, and took from thence three thousand talents, and that Herod the Great did afterwards the like, (*Antiq. lib.*

The treaty being thus concluded, Hyrcanus invited the king and his army into the city, where he gave them a splendid and most magnificent reception, and afterwards, with some of his forces, attended him to the Parthian war :

For

17. c. 16. and lib. 16 c. 11. But both these stories are highly improbable. David had now been dead near nine hundred years, and what is told of this treasure, supposes it to have been buried with him all this time. It supposes, that as oft as the city of Jerusalem, the palace, and the temple, during the reigns of the kings of Judah, had been plundered of all their wealth and treasure by prevailing enemies, this dead stock still remained safe from all rifle or violation. It supposes, that as oft as these kings were forced to take all the treasure that was found in the house of the Lord, as well as in their own, to relieve the exigencies of the state, they never meddled with this, that was uselessly buried with David in his grave. It supposes, that when one of the worst of their kings (2 Kings xv. 8. &c. and 2 Chron. xxviii. 28 &c.) plundered the temple of its sacred vessels, and cut them in pieces, to melt them down into money for his common occasions; and that when one of the best of them (2 Kings xviii. 15, 16.) was forced to cut off the gold wherewith the gates and pillars of the temple were overlaid, to bribe a destroying enemy, this useless treasure still continued untouched. Nay, it supposes, that when Nebuchadnezzar destroyed both the city and temple of Jerusalem; so that, for many years they both lay in rubbish, this treasure in David's sepulchre lay, all the while, safe and secure under it; and that when Antiochus Epiphanes, in like manner, destroyed the city, and robbed the temple of all that he could find, this treasure still escaped his rapacious hands, nor was ever molested, till Hyrcanus, at this time, was forced to make bold with it: All which suppositions seem highly improbable, and beyond belief. There is this, however, to be said in the matter, that as there certainly was a bank or treasury in the temple, where money was laid up for the support of the poor, for the relief of widows and fatherless children, and for the maintenance of divine service; and where the great men, and rich men of the nation, were used to deposit their wealth, for its better security: It is not improbable, that upon the account of the frequent invasions and depredations they were liable to, this treasure might be kept in some secret and subterraneous place, unknown to all, but such as were at the head of affairs; that Hyrcanus, being now under great difficulty to raise money, might borrow it out of this bank, till better times enabled him to repay it; and that Herod, when he plundered it quite, might trump up this plausible story, that it neither belonged to church, nor poor, nor any private per-

A. M.  
3841, &c  
Ant. Chris.  
153, &c.  
from 1  
Macc. v. 1.  
2 Macc. x  
11. and Jos.  
lib. 12. c.  
14 to the  
end of 1  
and 1 Macc.  
and of Jos.  
1 b. 13.  
c. 19.

A. M. For Antiochus, under pretence of rescuing his brother De-  
 3841, &c. metrius Nicanor from the hands of Phraortes king of Par-  
 Ant. Chiff. thia, who had long detained him as prisoner, marched against  
 163, &c. him with a powerful army. In three pitched battles he  
 from 1 gained the victory, and recovered Babylonia, Media, and  
 Macc. v. 1. some other provinces that formerly belonged to the Syrian  
 2 Macc. x. monarchy; and as Hyrcanus had his share in all these ac-  
 11, and Jos. tions, he returned with the glory of them at the end of  
 lib. 12. c. the year; but Antiochus<sup>a</sup> and his army, who chose to  
 14. to the winter in the east, were all, in one night\*, destroyed by  
 end of 1 the inhabitants of the country.  
 and 2 Macc. lib. 13.  
 and of Jos. c. 19.

In the mean time Demetrius<sup>†</sup> whom Phraortes<sup>†</sup> had set at liberty, was returned to Syria, and, upon his brother's death, had recovered his kingdom; but still persisting in his vicious courses, and tyrannical way of government, he had not been long re-instated, before his subjects rebelled against him, and one Alexander Zabina, pretending to be the son of Alexander Balas, laid claim to his crown; and by the assistance of Ptolemy Physcon king,

Demetrius  
recovers his  
kingdom of  
Syria, but is  
again depo-  
sed and put  
to death.

son, but had been deposited there by David, and his successors, as a proper supply for the state in times of need; *Prideaux's Connection*, anno 135.; and *Universal History*, lib. 2 c. 11.

<sup>a</sup> Justin, lib. 38.

\* The army, which, together with its attendants, amounted to the number of near four hundred thousand persons, being forced to disperse all over the country, were quartered at too great a distance from each other to be able in any time to gather together in a body; and as they had grievously oppressed all places where-ever they lay, the inhabitants took the advantage of this their dispersion, and conspired with the Parthians, in one and the same day, to fall upon them in their several quarters, and cut their throats; which accordingly they did, and when Antiochus, with the forces which he had about him, hastened to the assistance of the quarters that were near him, he was overpowered, and slain; so that of this numerous army, there scarce returned a man into Syria, to carry the doleful news of this terrible overthrow. Phraortes, however, (who was then king of Parthia,) caused the body of Antiochus to be taken up from among the dead, and having put it into a silver coffin, sent it honourably into Syria, to be there buried among his ancestors: *Justin*, lib. 38. c. 12.; *Joseph. Antiq.* lib. 13. c. 16.; *Apion*, *De Syriacis*.

<sup>†</sup> Justin, lib. 38.; *Joseph. Antiq.* lib. 13. c. 16.

† The reason of his leaving Demetrius, and sending him into Syria, was, by raising troubles there for the recovery of his crown, he might force Antiochus to return, in order to suppress them; *Prideaux's Connection*, anno 130.



king of Egypt, <sup>s</sup> defeated him in a pitched battle. Demetrius fled for refuge to Ptolemais, where his wife Cleopatra <sup>†</sup> then resided; but she ordered the gates to be shut against him, so that he was forced to betake himself for refuge to Tyre, where he fell into the hands of his enemies, who first made him prisoner, and then put him to death. Zabina, by this means, ascended the throne of Syria, but he did not sit long there; for Physcon, expecting that he should hold it in homage from him, which the other was not inclinable to do, resolved to pull him down as fast as he had set him up; and therefore, having married his daughter Tryphæna to Antiochus Gryphus, the son of the late Demetrius, he assisted him with an army, which vanquished Zabina, and compelled him to shut himself up in Antioch: But the Antiochians, being informed that he intended to rob their temple of Jupiter of a golden statute, (which was very massy,) to enable him to carry on the war, thrust him out from thence, so that wandering from place to place, he fell at last into the hands of those who carried him to Antiochus, by whose direction he was put to death.

During these divisions and disturbances, Hyrcanus laid hold on the opportunity, not only to enlarge his own territories, but to shake off the Syrian yoke likewise, and make himself wholly independent. He built the stately tower, or rather castle of Baris <sup>‡</sup>, upon a steep rock, that was fifty

<sup>s</sup> Justin, lib. 29. c. 1 and 2.; Joseph. Antiq. lib. 13. c. 17.

<sup>†</sup> This Cleopatra was the daughter of Ptolemy Philometer king of Egypt, and Cleopatra his wife. She was at first married to Alexander Balas, and afterwards to this Demetrius, in her father's lifetime. While Demetrius was detained a prisoner in Parthia, she became the wife of his brother Antiochus Sidetes; but upon the death of Sidetes, the restoration of Demetrius, and recovery of his kingdom, she returned to his bed again, but never had any great esteem for him, because, in his captivity, he had married the daughter of the king of Parthia; *Prideaux's Connection, anno 127.*

<sup>‡</sup> The word *Baris*, which is originally Chaldee, signifies properly *an house*, or *castle*, inclosed on every side, as this was encompassed with the wall which Simon built to stop the communication between the temple and the fortress of Acra. Here it was, that Hyrcanus built an apartment, for the safe keeping of his pontifical robes and ornaments, whenever he undressed

A. M.  
3841, &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
163, &c.  
from 1  
Macc. v. 1.  
2 Macc.  
x. 11, and  
Jol. lb 12.  
c. 14 to the  
end of 1  
and 2 Macc.  
and of Jol.  
lib. 13. c.  
19  
Hyrcanus  
enlarges his  
territories,  
destroys the  
temple on  
mount Ge-  
rizzim, and  
takes Sama-  
ria itself.

A. M.  
3841, &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
163. &c.  
from 1  
Macc. v. 1.  
2 Macc. x  
11. and Jos  
lib. 12. c.  
14. to the  
end of 1  
and 2 Macc  
and of Jos  
lib. 13.  
c. 19.

fifty cubits high, and on all sides inaccessible, except towards the temple. He took several cities, which the great draughts of men the kings of Syria had made for their foreign expeditions, had left unprovided with garrisons: He subdued Shechem, the chief seat of the sect of the Samaritans, and destroyed their temple which Sanballat had built them on mount Gerizzim: 'He conquered the Idumæans, and prevailed with them all to become proselytes \* to the Jewish religion, so that thenceforward they were incorporated into the same church and nation, and in time lost the name of *Idumæans* or *Edomites*, and were all called *Jews*: He renewed the alliance with the Romans, and,

dress'd himself; and here the Asmonæan princes took up their abode, and made it their royal palace, until Herod ascended the throne, and having rebuilt, enlarged, and beautified it, gave it the name of *Antonio*, in honour of his friend M. Antony; *Universal History*, lib. 2. 13 c. 11.

' Joseph. Antiq. lib. c. 17.

\* Among the Jews there were two sorts of proselytes, viz. the proselytes of the gate, and the proselytes of justice. 1. The *proselytes of the gate*, were so called, because they were permitted to dwell with the Jews in the same cities, and the occasion of their name seems to have been taken from that expression in the fourth commandment, *The strangers which are within thy gates*; where the word *ger*, which we render *strangers*, does every whit as properly signify *proselytes*. Now, this kind of proselytes were obliged only to renounce idolatry, and to worship God according to the law of nature, which the doctors of the Talmud reduced to seven articles, called by them the *seven precepts of the sons of Noah*. Whoever performed these were looked upon as in a state of acceptance with God; and allowed, not only to live quietly in their cities, but to resort likewise to their temple, there to offer up their prayers; but then they were permitted to enter no farther than into the outer court, which was called the *court of the Gentiles*. 2. The *proselytes of justice* were so called, because they took upon them to observe the whole law, both moral and ceremonial, in the latter of which some of the Jews, and especially the Pharisees, made justification to consist. The former sort of proselytes had no form of initiation, but these were admitted by baptism, sacrifice, and circumcision; and when they were thus admitted, they were received into the Jewish church, and to all the rights and privileges of church-membership, in the same manner as if they had been natural Jews; *Præface generale sur le Nov. Test. par de Beaufobre, & Lénfant*; & *Prideaux's Connection*, anno 129.

and, by a decree \* from them, obtained greater privileges and advantages than the Jews ever had before : And now, being much increased in riches and power, he sent his two sons, Aristobulus and Antigonus, to besiege Samaria, who on this occasion gave good proofs of their valour and conduct. The place held out for a whole year; but, being forced to surrender at last, by the direction of Hyrcanus it was utterly demolished: For he caused not only the houses and walls to be pulled down, and razed, but trenches to be dug every way cross to the ground whereon it stood, and to be filled with water, that it might never again be built.

A. M.  
3841, &c.  
Ant. Clir. f.  
103, &c.  
from 1  
Macc. v. 1.  
2 Macc. x.  
11. and Jos.  
lib 12. c.  
14 to the  
end of 1  
and 2 Macc.  
and 101 Jos.  
lib. 13.  
c. 19.

After the taking of Samaria, the remainder of his life Hyrcanus enjoyed in full quiet from all foreign wars; but \* towards the conclusion of it, met with some trouble from the Pharisees, a prevailing sect among the Jews. They, by their pretences to extraordinary strictness in religion, had gained to themselves a great reputation and interest among the common people; and, for this reason, Hyrcanus endeavoured to gain their esteem by all manner of favours. Having therefore, one day, invited several of their leading men to a splendid entertainment, when the banquet was over, he desired them to tell him, ‘ If, in the conduct of his life, he had done any thing contrary to justice and religion, according to the maxims received and taught amongst them.’ As soon as he had ended his discourse, all began to praise his administration, and to

His indignation against the Pharisees, and upon what occasion.

\* The ambassadors whom Hyrcanus sent to Rome to renew the league, which his father Simon had made with the senate. made their complaint — That Antiochus Sidetes had made war upon the Jews, contrary to what the Romans had in their behalf decreed in that league; that they had taken from them several cities, and made them become tributary to them for others, and forced them to a dishonourable peace, by besieging Jerusalem: Whereupon the senate decreed, that whatever of this kind had been done against them, since the time of the late treaty with Simon, should be all null and void; that all the places which had either been taken from them, or made tributary by the Syrians, should be restored, and made free from all homage, tribute, and other services; that, for the future, the Syrian kings should have no right to march their armies through the Jewish territories; that for all the damages which the Syrians had done the Jews, reparation should be made them; and that ambassadors should be sent from Rome to see this decree put in execution; *Jewish Antiq. lib. 13. c. 17.*

\* Joseph. Antiq. lib. 13. c. 18.



A. M. to give him all the commendations due to a brave man,  
 384<sup>r</sup>, &c. and a just and worthy governor.  
 Ant. Christ.

163, &c. When the rest had done their encomiums, Eleazar, who  
 from 1 had hitherto said nothing, rose up, and, directing his dis-  
 Macc. v. 1 course to Hyrcanus, 'Since you desire,' said he, 'to have  
 2 Macc. x 'the truth freely told you, if you would shew yourself a  
 11. and 'just man, resign the high-priesthood, and content your-  
 Jos. lib. 12. 'self with the civil government of the nation.' Hyrcanus  
 c. 14. 'the end of 1. then asking him, for what reason he gave him that ad-  
 and 2 Macc vice? 'Because,' replied he, 'we are assured, by the tes-  
 and of Jos. 'timony of the ancients among us, that your mother was  
 lib. 13. 'a captive taken in the wars, and being therefore the son  
 c. 19. 'of a strange woman, you are incapable of that high of-  
 'fice and dignity.'

This was an allegation false in fact, and therefore all the company resented it with a just indignation; but Hyrcanus was so exasperated at it, that he resolved to be revenged in a very signal manner. This disposition one Jonathan, an intimate friend of his, but a zealous Sadducee, observing, took the opportunity to endeavour to set him against the whole sect of the Pharisees, (among whom Hyrcanus had been bred up,) and to draw him over to that of the Sadducees. To this purpose he suggested to him,—  
 'That this was not the single act of Eleazar, but, most, certainly, a thing concerted by the whole party; that Eleazar, in speaking it out, was no more than the mouth of the rest; and that, to satisfy himself in these particulars, he needed only refer it to them in what manner the calumniator deserved to be punished.' Hyrcanus followed his advice: And therefore consulting the chief leaders of the Pharisees with relation to the penalty, which he might deserve, who had thus slandered the prince, and high-priest of his nation, he received for answer,—  
 'That as calumny was no capital crime, all the punishment that it merited could be only whipping \* or imprisonment.'

\* This punishment, among the Jews, was not to exceed forty stripes, Deut. xxv. 3.; and therefore the whip wherewith it was inflicted, was made with three thongs, and each blow gave three stripes, they never inflicted upon any criminal more than thirteen, because thirteen of these blows made thirty-nine stripes, and to have added another blow, would have been a transgression of the law, by inflicting two stripes more than what was prescribed. Rather than do this therefore, the usual way was, to give one too few; and therefore St Paul tells us, 2 Cor.

'ment:' \* which fully convinced Hyrcanus, that what Jonathan had suggested was true, and, from that very moment, he became a mortal enemy to the whole sect of the Pharisees. Their traditional constitutions he forthwith abrogated; he enjoined a penalty on all that should observe them; and himself for ever renouncing their party, went over to that of the Sadducees. But, notwithstanding this, he was an excellent governor; and, from the time of his father's death, having had the administration of all affairs, both in church and state, for the space of nine and twenty years, at his death, he left the high-priesthood and sovereignty to Judas Aristobulus, who was the first that (in a formal manner) took upon him the title of a *king*, by putting a diadem on his head.

A. M.  
3841, &c.  
Ant. Chris.  
153, &c.  
from 1  
Macc. v. 1,  
2 Macc. x.  
11. and Jos.  
lib. 12. c.  
14 to the  
end of 1  
and 2 Macc.  
and of Jos.  
lib. 13.  
c. 19.

His death  
and character.

### THE OBJECTION.

**I**N the Asimonæan family there was indeed a race of heroes, great warriors, and zealous defenders of their country's laws and liberties; and yet if we look into their conduct, even in those books that were wrote on purpose to aggrandize their fame, rather than give us the real history, we shall meet with several passages that will not bear examination.

Judas Maccabæus was certainly the principal character among them; and yet, to say nothing of his prodigality, throwing away both his own and his soldiers lives, by engaging the enemy (contrary to the persuasion of his friends) with a force no ways competent, <sup>y</sup> with no more than eight hundred against two and twenty thousand; we cannot but think, that the cruelty <sup>z</sup> which he exercised upon the Ephraimites, in putting all the males to the sword, razing their city, and riding in triumph, as it were, over the dead bodies of the slain, merely for refusing to open their gates to his army, were actions unbecoming the spirit of a generous conqueror.

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O

To

xi. 24. that when he was whipped by the Jews, *he received forty stripes, save one*; *Prideaux's Connection*, in the notes, anno 108.

\* Joseph. Antiq. lib. 13. c. 18.

<sup>y</sup> 1 Maccab. ix. 6. &c.

<sup>z</sup> Chap. v. 46. &c.

A. M.  
1841, &c.  
Ant. Chriſt.  
363, &c.  
from 1  
Macc. v. 1  
2 Macc. x.  
21. and Joſ.  
lib. 12. c.  
14. to the  
end of 1  
and 2 Macc.  
and of Joſ.  
lib. 13  
c. 19.

‘ To ſay nothing of thoſe prodigious elephants <sup>a</sup>, which,  
‘ with ſtrong wooden towers on their backs, could carry  
‘ thirty-two men and their arms, (a paradox which  
‘ Bochart <sup>b</sup> himſelf looks upon as incredible,) we cannot  
‘ but think, that Eleazar’s expoſing himſelf to certain  
‘ death, by killing one of theſe elephants, even though  
‘ he could not but foreſee, that it would infallibly fall up-  
‘ on him, and crush him, was an act of fool-hardineſs,  
‘ which the end he propoſed, <sup>c</sup> of delivering his people,  
‘ and getting himſelf a perpetual name, could no more  
‘ juſtify, than the pretence <sup>d</sup> of not falling into the hands  
‘ of the wicked, could acquit Razis (in ſtabbing himſelf,  
‘ pulling out his bowels, and caſting them among his e-  
‘ nemies) from the imputation of rage, madneſs, and ſelf-  
‘ murder.

‘ Reaſons of ſtate, we allow, may ſway princes in their  
‘ alliances, their friendſhips and negociations; but, in  
‘ the illuſtrious houſe of the Aſmonæans, to find Jona-  
‘ than <sup>e</sup> joined in league with two known impoſtors, a-  
‘ gainſt the rightful heirs of the crown of Syria; to find  
‘ Hyrcanus deſtroying the famous city of Samaria, and  
‘ laying the whole place deſolate, merely becauſe it was the  
‘ ſeat of a contrary ſect; and notwithstanding this, to  
‘ find him, <sup>f</sup> upon a ſlender diſguſt, turning Sadducee,  
‘ and adjoining himſelf to a ſet of people, who had re-  
‘ nounced all belief of a reſurrection and future ſtate,  
‘ ſhews, as if neither had had any great ſenſe of honour,  
‘ humanity, or religion, but in what they did, conſulted  
‘ chiefly their intereſt and advantage, their relentment  
‘ and revenge.’

Answered,  
by giving  
ſome ac-  
count of  
the ſeveral  
books of  
the Mac-  
cabees.

The name of *Maccabees* relates not only to Judas and his  
brothers, but to all thoſe that joined with him in the ſame  
cauſe; and, not only to them, but alſo to all others, who  
ſuffered in the like cauſe under any of the Grecian kings,  
whether of Syria or Egypt, though ſome of them lived  
long before them. Thus thoſe who ſuffered under Ptole-  
my Philopater, at Alexandria, fifty years before the time  
of Judas, were afterwards called *Maccabees*, as were like-  
wiſe Eleazar, and the mother, and her ſeven ſons, though  
they

<sup>a</sup> Chap. vi. 37. &c.    <sup>b</sup> De Animal. ſacris, part 1. lib. 2.  
c. 37.    <sup>c</sup> 1 Maccab. vi. 43. &c.    <sup>d</sup> 2 Maccab. xiv. 42.  
<sup>e</sup> 1 Maccab. x. 47.    <sup>f</sup> Joſeph. Antiq. lib. 13. c. 18.



they suffered likewise before Judas erected the standard which gave occasion to the name.

<sup>g</sup> As therefore those books which give us the history of Judas and his brethren, and their wars against the Syrian kings, in defence of their religion and liberties, are called *the first and second books of the Maccabees*; so that which gives us the history of those, who, in the like cause, under Ptolemy Philopater, were exposed to his elephants at Alexandria, is called *the third book of the Maccabees*; as that which contains the account of the martyrdom of Eleazar, and of the seven brothers, and their mother, is called *the fourth*.

A. M.  
3841, &c.  
Ant. Chris.  
163, &c.  
from 1  
Macc. v. 1.  
2 Macc. x.  
11. and Jos.  
lib 12. c.  
14 to the  
end of 1  
and 2 Macc.  
and of Jos.  
lib. 13.  
c. 19

<sup>h</sup> According to the order of time indeed, and the subject-matter which they treat of, these books are wrong placed; for the third should be set first, the second placed before the first, and the fourth immediately after it; so that (to reduce them to right order) the first should be put in the place of the third, and the third in the place of the first. Grotius indeed is of opinion, that the third book, though it treats of matters antecedent to what is the subject of the first and second, was nevertheless wrote after them, even after the book of Ecclesiasticus, and upon that account had the name of *the third book* given it; but the true reason of its being postponed is, --- That, being of less repute and authority than the two former, it has always been reckoned after them, according to the order of dignity, though it be before them in the order of time.

The first of these books <sup>i</sup> was originally written in the Chaldee † language of the Jerusalem dialect; which was the only language spoken in Judea after the return from the Babylonish captivity, and is a very accurate and excellent history, coming nearest to the style and manner of the

O 2

sacred

<sup>g</sup> Prideaux's Connection, anno 216.

<sup>h</sup> Calmets preface

sur le 3. liv. des Maccabees.

<sup>i</sup> Prideaux's Connection,

anno 166.

† It was extant in this language in the time of St Jerom; for he tells us, that he had seen it, and that the title which it then bore, was *Sharbit far bene El*, i. e. *the sceptre of the prince of the sons of God*, a title which well suited Judas, who was so valiant a commander of God's people then under persecution. From the Chaldee it was translated into Greek by Theodotian, as some think, though others account that version elder; and, from the Greek, both the Latin translation and our English did proceed; *Prideaux's Connection*, anno 166.

A. M.  
3841, &c.  
Ant. Chris.  
163. &c.  
from 1  
Macc. v. 1.  
2 Macc. x.  
11. and Jos.  
lib. 12. c.  
14. to the  
end of 1  
and 2 Macc  
and of Jos.  
lib. 13.  
c. 19.

sacred historical writings of any extant. The second is a compilation of several pieces; of two epistles from the Jews at Jerusalem to those of Alexandria, <sup>k</sup> which seem to be spurious <sup>\*</sup>; of a preface preceding the history; and of the history itself, which is an abridgement of a larger work, composed by one Jason, an Hellenist Jew of Cyrene; but the whole is by no means equal to the excellence and accuracy of the first. The third <sup>†</sup>, which seems to have been written by an Alexandrian Jew <sup>‡</sup>, in the Greek language, is set off with enlargements and embellishments of the author's own invention; but, as to the main groundwork of it, or the reality of such a persecution raised against the Jews at Alexandria, it is undoubtedly true; and,

<sup>k</sup> Prideaux's Connection, anno 166.

<sup>\*</sup> The former of these epistles calls the feast of the dedication, *Μικροπηγία ἐν Κισλεὺ*, i. e. *the feast of making tabernacles or booths in Cisleu*. Now, as the month Cisleu fell in the middle of winter, it can hardly be presumed, that the people could either lie abroad in these booths, or find green boughs enough at this time of the year wherewith to make them. This is an incongruity enough to explode the former epistle. And then, as to the second, it is not only written in the name of Judas Maccabæus, who was slain six and thirty years before the date which it bears, but also contains such fabulous and absurd stuff, as could never have been written by the great council of the Jews, assembled at Jerusalem for the whole nation, as this pretends to be; *Prideaux's Connection, anno 166.*

<sup>†</sup> This book, though it is in most of the ancient manuscript copies of the Greek Septuagint, and quoted by several fathers as an holy and divine book, yet was it never inserted in the vulgar Latin translation of the Bible; and, as our first English translations were made from that, none of them have it among the apocryphal books; nor has it ever since been added, though it certainly deserves a place therein much better than several other pieces that are there; *Prideaux's Connection anno 214.*

<sup>‡</sup> To this day it is extant in most of the ancient manuscript copies of the Greek Septuagint: as, particularly, in the Alexandrian manuscript in our king's library, and in the Vatican manuscript at Rome. But, as it was never inserted in the vulgar Latin version of the Bible, and as that version was the only one in use through the whole western church, until the reformation, it thence came to pass, that, in the first translations which we have of the Bible in the English, the third book of Maccabees has never yet been inserted among other apocryphal tracts, though it certainly deserves a place there much better than some parts of the second book of the Maccabees; *Prideaux's Connection, anno 216.*

and, though its style be a little too theatrical, its sentiments in many places are both beautiful and sublime. The fourth †, which is generally allowed to be the same with what is ascribed to Josephus, the Jewish historian, under the title of *The governing power of reason*, is designed to enlarge and adorn the history of old Eleazar, and of the seven brothers, who, with their mother suffered martyrdom under Antiochus, as it is related more succinctly in the second book of <sup>1</sup> Maccabees.

The author of the epistle to the Hebrews <sup>m</sup> has stamped some authority upon these books, by alluding to their history, and the punishment which the Maccabees were made to undergo; but we must not therefore receive them as canonical, because, according to the report of St Jerom, neither the Jewish nor the Christian church ever looked upon them in that capacity: *Maccabæorum libros legit quidem ecclesia, sed eos inter canonicas scripturas non recipit*: They read them as books which contained lessons of wholesome instruction, and excellent examples of worthy patriots, and glorious martyrs suffering manfully in the defence of their religion and liberty, <sup>n</sup> and *not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection.*

° In the whole compass of history, where can we find a pattern in all respects equal to Judas Maccabæus? Most of the commanders we read of were carried away with their ambition, vanity, or vain-glory; and, while they valued themselves upon the subduction of others, had no rule or command over their own passions: But in this Jewish leader we find all the characters of a great hero; courage and intrepidity, guided by counsel and wisdom, and without any allay either of rashness or pride. And what a profound knowledge he had of the laws of God, and the principles of true morality, every speech that he makes to his men, when he is animating them to the combat, and inspiring them with a contempt of the greatest dangers, is a sufficient indication.

He died indeed a little unfortunately, and, when his army had forsook him, encountered his enemies with an incompetent

† This book, in like manner, though it be found in most of the ancient Greek manuscripts, is not to be met with in any of our Latin Bibles; and has therefore no place among our apocryphal books; *Prideaux's Connection, anno 216.*

<sup>1</sup> Chap. vi. and vii.      <sup>m</sup> Heb. xi. 35. &c.      <sup>n</sup> Ibid.  
° Calmet's Commentary on 1 Macc. ix. 18.



A. M. 3841, &c.  
Ant. Chris-  
163, &c.  
from !  
Macc. v. 1.  
2 Macc. x.  
11, and Jos.  
lib. 12. c.  
14. to the  
end of 1  
and 2 Macc.  
and of Jos.  
lib. 13.  
c. 19.

incompetent strength; but, as he had all along fought under the protection of God's good providence, he had no more reason to be diffident at this time than he had been formerly. In his first engagement with the Syrians, when he was to encounter <sup>p</sup> *forty thousand horse, and seven thousand foot*, he made proclamation in the camp, that all such <sup>q</sup> *as had betrothed wives, or were building houses, or planting vineyards, or were any ways afraid*, might return home, which could not but reduce his army considerably; and yet we find him, with this handful of men, routing three generals that were sent against him at once, forcing and burning their camp, defeating their troops, and returning loaded with their spoils. His notion was, that God could save with a few as well as with a multitude; and therefore he might look on the desertion of his forces as a providential thing, to make the victory the more conspicuous, and to magnify the divine interposition in his deliverance.

<sup>r</sup> *The people that are with thee, says the Lord to Gideon, are too many for me to give the Midianites into their hands, lest Israel vaunt themselves against me, saying, Mine hand hath saved me: Proclaim therefore in the tents of the people, that whosoever is fearful and afraid, let him return, and depart from Mount Gilead; which reduced the Jewish army to ten thousand, and these again, by another expedient, were reduced to three hundred; and yet even these, by the assistance of the Lord of Hosts, utterly subdued the vast army of the Midianites. Upon this presumption, then, that Judas thought his army under the care and direction of the same Lord of Hosts, there was no discouragement in the desertion of his forces, nor any false reasoning in his speech: *If our time be come, let us die manfully for our brethren; which, in the present juncture of our affairs, is the best thing we can do: But if it be not, God, we know, is able to give us victory, and to defend us. For how often have we experienced the effects of his almighty power? Is not conquest always in his hands? Or is there any difference, with regard to him, between a larger or a smaller number?*" These seem to be the reasons that determined Judas in his choice of engaging the enemy, though superior in force: And*

<sup>p</sup> 1 Macc. iii. 39.  
vii. 2. &c.

<sup>q</sup> Ibid ver. 56.

<sup>r</sup> Judges

And if these reasons are built upon right notions of God, and confirmed by a long experience of his goodness, they will certainly clear him from all imputation of rashness, or presumptuous tempting of God in this action: An action for which St Ambrose, in particular, has represented him as a perfect model of true heroism: For <sup>s</sup> *Habebis*, says he, *fortitudinem bellicam, in qua non mediocris habes desti et decori forma est, quod mortem servituti præferat, ac turpitudini.*

The message which Moses sent to the king of Edom was delivered in these words,——*Let us pass, I pray thee, through thy country. We will not pass through the fields, or through the vineyards, neither will we drink of the water of thy wells. We will go by the king's high-way; we will not turn to the right hand or to the left, until we have passed thy borders: And Edom said unto him, Thou shalt not pass by me, lest I come out against thee with the sword.* But hereupon a question has arose, whether the Edomites might lawfully, and according to the rules of strict right, deny the Israelites a passage through their country?

<sup>t</sup> Selden is of opinion, that princes have always a right to deny foreign troops a passage through their country, not only to preserve their territories from being invaded, and their subjects from being plundered, but to prevent their being corrupted likewise, by the introduction of strange manners and customs into their kingdom. But <sup>u</sup> Gro-tius, on the other hand, asserts, that this refusal of the Edomites was an act contrary to the just rights of human society; that, after the promise which the Israelites had made of marching through their country quietly and inoffensively, they might very justly have fallen upon the Edomites, had they not been restrained by a divine prohibition; that, for this very cause, the Greeks thought proper to make war upon the kings of Mysia; and that the principal reason which the powers of Christendom gave for their carrying their arms against the Saracens was, because they hindered their brethren going in pilgrimage to Jerusalem from passing through their country.

However the sentiments of these two great men may be, it is certain, that Gideon's severity against the inhabitants

<sup>s</sup> Ambros. lib. 1. Offic. c. 41.

<sup>t</sup> Mare Clausum, c. 20.

<sup>u</sup> De jure belli et pacis, lib. 2. c. 2.; et Mare Clausum, lib. 1. c. 1.

A. M.  
3841, &c.  
Ant. Chris.  
163, &c.  
from 1  
Macc. v. 1.  
2 Macc.  
x. 11, and  
Jol. lib. 12.  
c. 14. to the  
end of 1  
and 2 Macc.  
and of Jol.  
lib. 13 c.  
12.  
Why he  
might justly  
destroy the  
Ephraim-  
ites.

A. M. 3841, &c. Ant. Chris. 183, &c. from 1 Macc. v. 1. 2 Macc. x. 11 and Jos. lib. 11. c. 14. to the end of 1. and 2 Macc. and of Jos. lib. 13. c. 19.

tants of Succoth, for denying his army some necessary refreshments when they were pursuing the enemy, is justified upon the presumption, that such a refusal was a kind of rebellion against the state, that those who exposed their lives for the public safety had a right to be maintained at the public expence, and that no man might call any thing his own when a demand of this nature came upon him. And if Gideon, \* who was sent immediately by an angel to deliver his brethren, and, in all his achievements, was supported by the spirit of God, thought it no injustice to put the people of Succoth † to exquisite tortures for denying his army what they wanted; why might not Judas give the people of Ephron up to military execution, for being so cruel and inhuman as to deny him a passage thro' their city, when there was no possibility of taking his rout any other way?

What the particular situation of this Ephron was, we can no where learn; but the author of the book of Maccabees seem to imply, that the country all about it was impassable, *i. e.* was very probably so full of water and morasses, that the ‡ company which Judas had along with him must have been lost, had they been obliged to *turn either to the right hand or to the left*. In their own defence, therefore, they were necessitated to make their way thro' the town; and if, in the siege and sackage of it, great numbers of people were put to the sword, this was properly the effect of their own folly and obstinacy, in refusing not so much to do a favour as an act of common right, even when it was humbly requested by a general, at the head of a victorious army.

That an elephant might bear thirty-two men on his back.

The strength of the Behemoth (which by most interpreters, is supposed to be the elephant) is thus expressed in the book of Job: *ⁱ His bones are as strong pieces of brass, and his small bones like bars of iron*; and therefore it is no wonder, that creatures of this prodigious strength (when the method of fighting was chiefly by force) should be made use of in all military expeditions. *ᵇ* Some of these creatures have been known to carry two cannons, fastened together by a cable-rope, of three thousand pounds weight each, for five hundred paces together, with their teeth; and what reason have we to doubt, but that

\* Judges iv. 14.  
v. 45, 46.  
on 1 Maccab. vi. 37.

† Chap. viii. 16.

‡ Chap. xi. 18.

ⁱ 1 Maccab.

ᵇ Calmet's Commentary



that they are able to carry a much greater weight upon their backs?

The largest and strongest species of these animals is said to be bred in India, (for those that come out of Africa are not near so big;) and therefore, if we suppose that the elephants which Antiochus carried to the wars with him were of this Indian breed, (as <sup>c</sup> the circumstances of the whole story make it highly probable that they were) there cannot be so much difficulty as is imagined in one of these creatures carrying upon its back two and thirty men light-armed, (as archers are known to be,) with towers, or other such vehicles as might be thought proper to give them an ascendant in the fight, and so secure them from the darts and other weapons of the enemy. For, upon supposition that each of these men, one with another, weighed an hundred and fifty pounds, the amount of the weight of thirty-two will be no more than four thousand eight hundred pounds; and yet it is a common thing to meet with elephants of a moderate size, that will carry you five or six thousand pounds weight; so that, upon the lowest computation, we have full two thousand pounds weight allowed for the wooden machine wherein the slingers and archers were seated and secured.

The danger indeed of approaching this animal, with such a number of armed men upon its back, is very visible; but most of the Jewish doctors and fathers of the Christian church look upon Eleazar's action in killing the royal elephant, (as he took it to be,) though at the expence of his own life, as a singular instance of courage and magnanimity. Fool-hardiness it would have been, had he been certainly persuaded, that the creature would have fallen upon him so directly and so suddenly as it did; but why might he not rather think, that it might possibly tumble down on one side, so as to miss him, or live for some moments after it had received the wound, so as to give him an opportunity to escape?

<sup>d</sup> The motives which the history assigns for his adventuring upon this exploit are not discommendable. The preservation of our laws, liberties, and religion, requires, upon a proper occasion, the hazarding our lives: Our reputation, too, is a natural good, which we are not only bound to preserve, but, by all lawful means, allowed to improve and increase; and therefore charity <sup>e</sup> will not

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suffer

<sup>c</sup> Ibid.

<sup>d</sup> 1 Maccab. vi. 44.

<sup>e</sup> Ibid. ver. 44.

A. M.  
3841, &c.  
Ant. Chris.  
163, &c.  
from 1  
Macc. v. 1.  
2 Macc. x.  
11, and Jos.  
lib. 12. c.  
14. to the  
end of 1  
and 2 Macc.  
and of Jos.  
lib. 13.  
c. 19.



A. M. 3841, &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
163, &c.  
from 1  
Macc. v. i.  
2 Macc. x.  
xi. and Jos.  
lib. 12.  
c. 14. to the  
end of 1 and  
2 Macc.  
and of Jos.  
lib. 13.  
c. 19.

The action  
of Razis  
discoun-  
tenanced.

suffer us (without very good reasons) to believe, that these motives, which in themselves were laudable, lost all their merit, and were adulterated by any sinister ends that Eleazar might propose to himself. We cannot, I say, without rashness, blame him, or deny him that justice which we owe to all actions that are apparently commendable, *i. e.* to believe them really good, so long as we have no proofs to the contrary: And, as it is no uncommon thing in such heroic acts as these, to find persons (under the Jewish œconomy more especially) instigated by a divine impulse, it will best become us to suspend our judgments concerning this action of Eleazar's, until we can find arguments to prove that he had no motive extraordinary to attempt it.

But there is not the like reason, I think, to suspend our judgment concerning the action of Razis, which, upon due consideration, was no better than self-murder. <sup>f</sup> To consider it, indeed, according to the notion which some Heathens had of courage and magnanimity, contempt of death, and love of liberty, it comes nearer to what they called *true heroism*, than all the great actions that history has recorded of the Greeks and Romans. Nay, the Jews themselves are willing to place this man in the number of their most illustrious martyrs, and from his example (as well as some others) pretend, that upon certain occasions, self-murder is not only allowable, but highly commendable; never considering, <sup>g</sup> that, in the sixth commandment, it is as much prohibited as the murder of any one else; and that, if I must not shed the blood of another man for this very reason, because <sup>h</sup> *he is made in the image of God*, I must not shed the blood of myself, because I also am a man, and made in the image of God as well as he.

<sup>i</sup> Razis, indeed, was sorely beset, and *ready to have been taken by his enemies on every side*; but then he should have surrendered himself to their treatment, and testified his magnanimity, not in butchering himself, but in manfully enduring whatever inflictions they laid upon him. Had the martyrs of old thought themselves at liberty to dispose of their own lives upon any emergent danger, or apprehension of suffering, we had read little of their being <sup>k</sup> *mocked*

<sup>f</sup> Calmet's Commentary on 2 Maccab. xiv. 42. <sup>g</sup> Bishop Fleetwood against self-murder. <sup>h</sup> Gen. ix. 6.

<sup>i</sup> 2 Maccab. xiv. 42.

<sup>k</sup> Heb. xi. 36, 37.

*mocked and scourged, and tormented, and less of their being stoned, and sawn asunder, but a great deal of their stepping out of the world, (as some call it,) when any difficulty or persecution came to press upon them.*

A. M.  
584. Ser.  
Ant. Chriſt.  
163. &c.  
from 1  
Macc. v. 1.  
2 Macc. x.  
11. and Joſ.  
lib. 12. c.  
14. to the  
end of 1  
and 2 Macc.  
and of Joſ.  
lib. 13.  
c. 19.

Upon the whole, therefore, we may conclude, that as this was not the practice of these worthies of old, <sup>1</sup> who obtained a good report by faith, it was not true courage, but the want of it, that put Razis upon committing this barbarous cruelty to himself; that it was pride, not patience, (which is the proper virtue of a martyr,) that made him fly to death, merely for refuge against these outrages which he had not strength of mind to withstand; and therefore St Austin's short reflection upon the whole is, — <sup>m</sup> *Pactum narratum est, non laudatum, et judicandum potius quam imitandum.*

This reflection indeed will hold good in several other matters related in the history of the Maccabees, viz. that the author of it neither commends nor discommends, but only relates them. Demetrius Soter, for instance, was the rightful heir to the crown of Syria, and Alexander Balas no more than a vile impostor; and yet Jonathan thought proper to adjoin himself to him, because <sup>n</sup> he remembered what a bitter enemy Demetrius had all along been to the Jewish interest; how oft he had sent his generals with positive orders to take his brother Judas dead or alive; and what ruin and oppression his frequent invasions had brought upon the whole nation. And therefore no wonder, that we find him taking a contrary part to the man, whom he looked upon as an enemy to his country. Demetrius Nicanor, in like manner, was the true heir to the same crown, and Alexander Zabina no more than a brother's son of Alexandria; and yet we find John Hyrcanus entering into a league and alliance with the latter, because indeed Demetrius had behaved so ungratefully to the Jews, (who had rescued him from the rebellion of his subjects,) as to load them with heavy taxes, even though he had promised them an immunity from them to engage their assistance.

Jonathan  
not to  
blame in  
joining an  
usurper.

The truth is, the kingdom of Syria was always in hostility with Judea. Its kings were tyrants, and great persecutors of the Jewish religion; and therefore what reason had any Jewish prince to trouble himself with the right of

P 2 succession

<sup>1</sup> Heb. xi, 39. <sup>m</sup> Epist. 61. <sup>n</sup> Prideaux's Con-  
nection, anno 153.



A. M.  
3841, &c.  
Ant. Chris.  
163, &c.  
from 1  
Macc. v. 1.  
2 Macc. x.  
11. and Jos.  
lib. 12. c.  
14. to the  
end of 1  
and 2 Macc.  
and of Jos.  
lib. 13.  
c. 19.

Hyrcanus  
did not de-  
stroy Sama-  
ria out of  
enmity to  
the sect of  
Samaritans;

nor follow  
the Saddu-  
cees in any  
wicked te-  
nets.

succession in an enemy's country? All that he seemed to be concerned in was, <sup>o</sup> to make what advantages he could of their divisions, and by adjoining himself to the party, from whence he might expect the best treatment and support, to secure and establish his own, and his country's interest.

It is a mistake however to think, that Hyrcanus destroyed Samaria, out of the hatred which the Jews bore to the sect of the Samaritans, because, upon examination, we shall find, that none of that sect did, at that time, live in that place. <sup>p</sup> The ancient Samaritans, who were of the sect that worshipped God on mount Gerizzim, had slain, in a tumult, (as we related before,) one Andromachus, a favourite of Alexander the Great, whom he had constituted governor of Syria; and in revenge for this base act, Alexander had expelled them all from Samaria, and in their stead, new-planted the city with a colony of Macedonians, Greeks, and Syrians mixed together, and they were the descendents of those who inhabited Samaria, when Hyrcanus made war against it; for the expelled Samaritans retired to Shechem, where they settled their abode, and made it the head seat of their sect ever since.

In like manner, it is a mistake to think, that because Hyrcanus is said to have left the Pharisees, and adjoined himself to the Sadducees, that therefore he espoused their doctrine against the resurrection and a future state. <sup>q</sup> On the contrary, it seems highly probable, that at this time, the Sadducees had gone no farther in the doctrine of their sect, than their rejecting all the unwritten traditions which the Pharisees held in so much veneration. Josephus mentions no other difference, in his time, between them; nor does he say, that Hyrcanus went over to the Sadducees in any other particular, than in the abolishing the traditional constitutions of the Pharisees; and therefore we can hardly think, that so good and righteous a man, as he is represented to have been, would, upon any provocation whatever, have been induced to renounce the great and fundamental articles of his religion; but it can be no diminution to his character, we hope, that he made it his business to oppose those false interpretations of the law, which our blessed Saviour, in the course of his ministry, so severely condemned.

DISSER-

<sup>p</sup> Ibid. 126.

<sup>p</sup> Ibid. 109.

<sup>q</sup> Ibid. 108.

## DISSERTATION IV.

*Of the Original and Tenets of the Jewish Sects.*

IT seems very probable indeed, that during the times of the prophets, who, by their commerce with God, were immediately instructed in his will, no disputes about matters of religion could possibly arise, because their authority was sufficient for the decision of every controversy; but that when this race of prophets disappeared, and their authority ceased, men soon began to wrangle and dispute, and to form themselves into different sects and parties, upon the first occasion that offered.

After the return of the people from Babylon, Joshua, the high-priest, and Zerubbabel the governor, together with the chief elders their cotemporaries, and others that afterwards succeeded them, collected together all the ancient and approved usages of the Jewish church, which had been in practice before the captivity. These, and whatever else pretended to be of the like nature, Ezra brought under a review, and after due examination, having settled them by his approbation and authority, he thereby gave birth to what the Jews call their *Oral Law*. For<sup>r</sup> they pretend, that when God gave unto Moses the law on mount Sinai, he gave him, at the same time, the interpretation of it, with a strict injunction to commit the former to writing, but to deliver the other down to posterity only by word of mouth; that, pursuant to this injunction, Moses wrote several copies of the law, which he left behind him among the several tribes, but in the interpretation of it, he took care more especially to instruct his successor Joshua; that after his death, Joshua delivered this interpretation, or oral law, to the elders who succeeded him, and that they delivered it to the prophets, who transmitted it down to each other, until it came to Jeremiah; that Jeremiah delivered it to Baruch; Baruch to Ezra; Ezra to the men of the great synagogue, until it came to Simon the Just; and that Simon delivered it to others, who handed it down, in a continued succession, until

A. M.  
3841, &c.  
Ant. Cl. r.  
163. &c.  
from 1  
Macc. v. 1.  
2 Macc. x.  
11. and Jos.  
lib. 12. c.  
14 to the  
end of 1  
and 2 Macc.  
and of Jos.  
lib. 13.  
c. 19.

When sects  
first began.

M. A. until it came to Rabbah Judah Hakkadosh, who wrote it  
 384<sup>1</sup>, &c. into the book which they call *the Mishnah*.  
 Ant. Chris.

163, &c. But all this is a mere fiction, spun out of the fertile in-  
 from 1 vention of the Talmudists, and the little truth that there  
 Macc. v. 1 seems to be in it, is only this,—That after the death of  
 2 Macc. x. Simon the Just, there arose a sort of men, (whom the  
 11. and Jos. lib. 2 Jews call *Tannaim*, or *Mishnical doctors*,) that made it their  
 c. 14. to the business to study and descant upon these traditions, which  
 end of 1 had been received, and allowed by Ezra and the men of  
 and 2 Macc. the great synagogue, to draw such consequences and in-  
 lib. 13. ferences from them, as they thought proper; to ingraft  
 c. 19. these into the body of the ancient traditions; and to expect  
 from others that they should receive them, as if they had  
 been as authentic as the other. But this imposition was  
 too gross and palpable not to be attended with remonstrances  
 from several: So that, in a short time, the Jewish  
 church came to be divided into two grand parties, *viz.*  
 those who adhered to the written law only, among whom  
 the Sadducees were the chief; and those who, over and  
 above this, received the traditions and constitutions of the  
 elders, among whom the Pharisees made the greatest fi-  
 gure.

The Sad-  
 ducees.

<sup>s</sup> The most ancient sect among the Jews, was that of  
 the Sadducees, which took its name from Sodock, the  
 founder of it. This Sodock (as the Talmudic story is)  
 was the disciple of Antigonus Socho, who lived accord-  
 ing to the Jewish calculation) about three hundred years  
 before Christ, and used often to inculcate to his disciples,  
 that they ought to serve God disinterestedly, without any  
 view of compensation, and not like slaves, who only serve  
 their master for the sake of reward: And from hence his  
 disciples Sodock and Baithus made this wrong inference,  
*viz.* that there was no reward to be expected in another  
 world, and consequently that the soul dies, and the body  
 will not rise again. Whether this mistake of the doctrine  
 of Antigonus, or, as others suppose, the dissoluteness of  
 manners which at that time might prevail, gave occasion  
 to the opinion of the Sadducees, but so it was, that in pro-  
 cess of time, they grew to be very impious and detestable.

They

<sup>s</sup> Prideaux's Connection, anno 446; Lamy and Beausobre's  
 Introduction.



They denied the resurrection of the dead, the being \* of angels, and the existence of the spirits or souls of men departed. Their notion was, that there was no spiritual being, but God only; that, as to man, this world was his all; that, at his death, his soul and body die together, never to live any more; and that therefore there is no future reward or punishment. They acknowledged indeed, that God made this world by his power, and governs it by his providence, and for the carrying on of this government, hath ordained rewards and punishments; but then they suppose, that these rewards and punishments are in this world only; and for this reason alone it was, that they worshipped him, and paid obedience to his laws. All unwritten traditions, as well as all written books, † except the five books of Moses, they absolutely rejected; and the probable reason

A. M.  
3841, &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
163, &c.  
from 1  
Macc. v. 1.  
2 Macc. x.  
11. and Jos.  
lib. 12.  
c. 14. to the  
and of 1  
and 2 Macc.  
and of Jos.  
lib. 13.  
c. 19.  
Their principles.

\* In what sense the Sadducees denied the existence of angels, it is difficult to determine, since they certainly acknowledged the authority of the Pentateuch. Some pretend, that they accounted the invention of angels but a novel thing, and that their very name was never heard of, until the return from the captivity, and therefore they rejected them; whilst others suppose, that they looked upon them as the inseparable powers of God, which, like the rays of the sun, without being parted from that planet, shine and shed their influence here below. But now, considering that the Sadducees received the five books of Moses, they could hardly entertain any such notions as these. As therein they read of frequent apparitions of angels, they could not fancy them a new invention of the Rabbins that returned from the captivity. As they saw in these books, that they properly came down from heaven upon earth, they could not imagine; that they were beings inseparable from the Deity; and therefore we may suppose, that they rather looked upon them only as so many phantasms; and that, as the bodies, which these angels put on, had perhaps only the appearance of human bodies, the same notion they might have of the spirits which animated them; because every thing, except God, in their opinion, was material; *Basnage's History of the Jews, lib. 2. c. 6.*

† Mr Basnage, in his history of the Jews, lib. 2. c. 6. though he allows the question to be difficult, seems to be of a contrary opinion. 1<sup>st</sup>, Because the Sadducees taught and prayed in the temple, where the prophets, and other holy writers, were read, as appears from the example of Christ, who explained a passage out of Isaiah 2<sup>dly</sup>, Because Josephus, who ought to have been well acquainted with the principles of this sect, relates of them, (lib. 6. c. 9.), that they received what was written. And, 3<sup>dly</sup>, because

A. M. reason why they did so, is, that they could not so well  
 384<sup>1</sup>, &c. maintain these opinions, which are not so flatly contradict-  
 Ant. Chrif. ed in the Pentateuch, as in the other sacred books, if once  
 163, &c. they admitted these books to be canonical. All superna-  
 from 1, tural helps to their duty they utterly denied: For their  
 Macc. v. 1, doctrine was, that God had made man perfect master of  
 2 Macc. x, doctine was, that God had made man perfect master of  
 11. and Jos. all his actions, with a full freedom to do either good or  
 lib. 12, c evil as he thinks fit, without any assistance to him for the  
 14. to the one, or restraint upon him as to the other; and for this  
 end of 1 reason, because they looked upon all men to have an inhe-  
 and 2 Macc. rent power to make their condition better or worse, ac-  
 and of Jos. cording as they took right or wrong measures, whenever  
 lib. 13. they sat in judgment upon criminals, they were always re-  
 c. 19. marked to pass the severest sentences; As indeed their ge-  
 neral character was, that they were a very ill-natured sort  
 of men, churlish and morose in their behaviour even to  
 each other, but cruel and savage to every one besides.  
 Their principles, one might suppose, would have naturally  
 led them into all manner of riot and excess; but it was not  
 always so. Some of them were men of rigid virtue and  
 strict probity; for though they had cast off the belief of

because the Pharisees, in their disputes with them about the  
 doctrine of the resurrection, quote, not only the writings of  
 Moses, but those of the prophets likewise, and other hagiogra-  
 phers, whose authority the others do not deny, but only en-  
 deavour to elude the force of the passages, that are hence pro-  
 duced against them. Upon the whole, therefore, Scaliger (E-  
 lench. Trihær. c. 16.) is of opinion, that these Sadducees did  
 not absolutely reject all the sacred writings but rather looked  
 upon them as books composed by holy men, whose memoirs  
 they revered, though they could not believe them of the  
 like authority with the law of Moses. which to them was the  
 only rule of faith. But notwithstanding this, 'the account  
 ' which is given us in the gospel (says the learned Prideaux) of  
 ' the disputation which Christ had with the Sadducees, plainly  
 ' proves the contrary. For seeing there are so many texts in the  
 ' prophets and hagiographa, which plainly and directly prove  
 ' a future state, and the resurrection from the dead, no other  
 ' reason can be given why Christ waved all these proofs, and  
 ' drew his argument, only by consequence, from what is said  
 ' in the law, but that he knew, that the Sadducees, had reject-  
 ' ed the prophets and the hagiographa, and therefore would  
 ' admit of no arguments, but from the law only.' Anno 107.  
 ' Basnage's History of the Jews, lib. 2. c. 6.

a future state, yet as they admitted of a providence to punish vice, and reward virtue, in this life, their desire of present and temporal happiness put a restraint upon their appetites, and kept them within the bounds of their duty. And for the same reason, they were not without their expectations of a Messias to come. Nay, upon this subject they argued with more consistency than the other Jews did. For confining all their hopes to the present state of things, and looking upon him as a temporal king and deliverer only, they had a more than ordinary interest and concern in his appearance in their lifetime, that thereby they might reap the fruits of his conquests, and enjoy the happiness which the prophets had promised during his reign. Their number was the fewest of all the sects of the Jews; but they were men of the best quality and greatest estates: And as all those who were of the greatest power and riches, were cut off in the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, it is generally supposed that this whole sect then perished with them.

<sup>u</sup> The Jews, who were carried captive into Egypt, though they kept themselves clear from the idolatry of the country, did nevertheless (about the time of Ptolemy Philometor) fall into their method of handling divinity, and were not a little fond of their allegorical interpretations. This mystical treatment of the Scriptures alarmed others, who, from the word *Kara*, <sup>x</sup> which signifies *to read*, obtained the name of *Karraites*, *i. e.* such as adhered to the text, and were literal expounders of Scripture. Josephus indeed takes no notice of any people of this denomination; but his silence is no argument against their existence, because we find him omisive in other particulars of the like nature. The Herodians, for instance, a sect well known in the gospel, and remarkable for their political as well as doctrinal principles, he makes no mention of, and might therefore well pass by the Karraites, who, having no peculiar tenets, but only that of teaching and expounding the law according to its literal sense, could not well be discriminated by the name of any particular sect. These *Scriptuarists*, as they were called, <sup>y</sup> when they came to be headed by Shammai, a learned doctor of the law, (who about an hundred years before our Saviour Christ, opened

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<sup>u</sup> Ibid. lib. 2. c. 9.<sup>x</sup> Lamy's introduction, lib. 1.

c. 9.

<sup>y</sup> Prideaux's Connection, anno 37.

A. M.  
3841, &c.  
Ant. Chris.  
163, &c.  
from 1  
Macc. v. 1.  
2 Macc. x.  
11. and Jos.  
lib. 12. c.  
14. to the  
end of 1  
and 2 Macc.  
and of Jos.  
lib. 13.  
c. 19.



A. M.  
3841, &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
163, &c.  
from 1  
Macc. v. 1.  
2 Macc. x.  
11. and  
Jof. lib. 12.  
c. 14. to the  
end of 1  
and 2 Macc.  
and of Jof.  
lib. 13. c.  
19.

a great school against Hillel, who was for the mystical way of interpretation) made a considerable figure: But at length the school of Hillel, by the determination of a voice from heaven, (as was pretended,) carried it against the school of Shammai; so that the Karraites were quite absorbed, till they appeared again about the sixth century after Christ.

At this time the Talmud, a vast voluminous book, which contained all the traditions of the Jewish church, was published, and a great deal of deference and veneration was required to be paid to it: But when men of learning and judgment came to look into it, and found it (as it is) stuffed with trifling and incredible stories, they rejected its authority, as not deserving their belief, and betook themselves wholly to such as were of undoubted credibility, *the writings of the law and the prophets*. In consequence of which there arose two parties, one standing up for the Talmud and its traditions, and the other disavowing both, as containing, in their opinion, the inventions of men, and not the doctrines and commands of God. Those who stood up for the Talmud and its traditions, were chiefly the Rabbins and their followers, from whence their party had the name of *Rabbinists*, and the others, who were for the Scripture only, were again called *Karraites*; under which two names the controversy was at that time carried on between them, and so continues even to this day.

Among all the Jewish doctors, these Karraites are justly accounted the most learned set of men; but their number (in these western parts especially) is but small. <sup>2</sup> About the middle of the last century there was a particular account taken of them, wherein it appeared that in Poland there were two thousand; at Caffa in Crim-Tartary, twelve hundred; at Cairo, three hundred; at Damascus, two hundred; at Jerusalem, thirty; in Babylon, an hundred; and in Persia, six hundred, which, in all, amount to no more than four thousand four hundred and thirty; a small number in comparison of the bulk of the nation, which is of the party of the Rabbinists.

The Phari-  
sees,

The *Pharisees* were so called from the Hebrew word *Pharas*, which signifies *to separate*; because the prevailing passion, or rather ambition, of this sect was, to distinguish and

<sup>2</sup> Calmet's Dictionary, under the word.

and separate itself from the rest of the people, by a greater degree of holiness and piety, but accompanied with very much affectation and abundance of vain observances. <sup>a</sup> At what time this sect began first to appear, is no easy matter to determine. Josephus makes mention of them in the government of Jonathan, an hundred and forty years before Christ, as a very powerful body of men at that time; nor is it improbable, that their origin was somewhat earlier, and that, as soon as the Sadducees discovered their principles to the world, these men of different sentiments might not long after rise up in opposition to them: For it is evident from the character which the Jewish historian gives of them, that, in the main articles of their belief, they were entirely repugnant to the Sadducees. <sup>b</sup> The Pharisees believe in a fate, says he, and attribute all things to it, but nevertheless they acknowledge the freedom of man; but how they made these two apparent incompatibles consist together, is no where sufficiently explained. They teach, that God will one day judge the world, and punish or reward men according to their merits. They maintain, that souls are immortal, and that, in the other world, some will be shut up in an eternal prison, and others sent back again; but with this difference, that those of good men shall enter into the bodies of men, those of wicked men into the bodies of beasts; which exactly agrees with the famous transmigration of Pythagoras. Their adherence to the law was so exact, that, for fear of violating the least precept of it, they scrupulously observed every thing that had the least relation to it, even though the law had neither commanded nor forbidden them. Their zeal for the traditions of the elders was such, that they derived them from the same fountain with the written word itself, pretending, that Moses received both of them from God on mount Sinai, and therefore ascribing an equal authority to both. They had a notion, that good works were meritorious; and therefore they invented a great number of supererogatory ones, upon which they valued themselves more than upon a due observance of the law itself. Their frequent washings and ablutions, <sup>c</sup> their long prayers in public places, their <sup>d</sup> nice avoidance of re-

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puted

<sup>a</sup> Vide Lamy's Introduction, and Prideaux's Connection. Joseph. De bello Jud. lib. 2. c. 12. <sup>c</sup> Matth. vi. 5, &c. Luke vii. 39.

A. M.  
3841, &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
163, &c.  
from 1  
Macc. v. 1.  
1 Macc x.  
11. and Jos.  
lib. 12. c.  
14. to the  
end of 1  
and 2 Macc.  
and of Jos.  
lib 13.  
c. 19.

A. M.  
3481, &c  
Ant. Chris.  
163, &c.  
from 1  
Macc. v. 1.  
2 Macc.  
x. 11, and  
Jof. lib. 12  
c. 14. to the  
end of 1  
and 2 Macc.  
and of  
Jof. lib.  
13 c. 19.

puted sinners, their fasting and great abstinence, their penance and mortification, <sup>e</sup> their minute payment of tithes, their <sup>f</sup> strict observance of the Sabbath, and <sup>g</sup> ostentatious enlargement of \* Phylacteries, were all works of this kind; which nevertheless gained them such esteem and veneration, that while the common people loved, the greater ones dreaded them, so that their power and authority in the state was considerable, though generally attended with pernicious consequences, because their hearts were evil: For notwithstanding their shew of mighty zeal and great austerity, they were in reality, no better than what our Saviour calls them, vain and ostentatious, spiteful and malicious, griping and voracious, lovers of themselves only, and despisers of others; infomuch, that it was hard to say which was most predominant in them, their insatiable avarice, their insupportable pride, or abominable hypocrisy.

The Scribes

In conjunction with the Pharisees, the Scribes are often mentioned in the Scriptures of the New Testament. They were not however any particular sect, but a profession of men of divers kinds, following literature. For generally all, that were any way learned among the Jews, were, in the

<sup>e</sup> Matth. xxiii. 23.    <sup>f</sup> Chap. xii. 2.    <sup>g</sup> Chap. xxiii. 5.

\* The word *Phylactery*, in the Greek, signifies *a place to keep any thing in*; in the Hebrew, it is called *Tephillim*, which signifies *prayers*, because the Jews wear their Phylacteries chiefly when they go to their devotion. It is a common opinion, that these Phylacteries were long pieces of parchment, whereon were written certain passages out of Exodus and Deuteronomy, which they tied to their foreheads and left arm, in memory of the law; but a late explainer of the Jewish customs assures us, that they were parchment-cases, formed with very great nicety, into their proper shapes; that the case for their head had four cavities, into each of which they put a piece of parchment rolled up, wherein were written some sections of the law; but that which was for the arm, had but one cavity, and into it they put one piece of parchment, wherein four passages of Scripture were written; *Lamy's Introduction*, lib. 1. c. 16. The whole of this custom is founded on Exod. xiii. 9. and Deut. vi. 8.; but the words are only metaphorically to be understood, as a command to have God's laws perpetually before our eyes, and his deliverance always in remembrance. It cannot be denied however, that these Phylacteries were generally worn by the Jews in our Saviour's time, and were not disused so late as St Jerom's; *Lamy*, *ibid.*



the time of our Saviour and his apostles, called *Scribes*, but especially those, who by their skill in the law, and divinity of the Jews, were advanced to sit in Moses's seat, either as judges in their Sanhedrim, or teachers in their schools or synagogues. Both their name and profession began immediately after the Babylonish captivity, about five hundred years before the birth of Christ; for Ezra himself was one of the first. They were a body of the most learned men of the nation, and chiefly of the sect of the Pharisees, though some of them might possibly be Karaites, or Antitraditionists, as it seems to appear by one of them asking our Saviour, <sup>b</sup> *Which was the first commandment of all?* and being so highly pleased with his answer.

Those who were descended from the stock of Levi, were usually called *Scribes of the clergy*; but such as were sprung from any other tribe, were named *Scribes of the people*. The business of the latter, was to take care to preserve the purity of the text in all the Bibles, which they copied out, and to see that no corruption was crept into the original. It was not held proper for every vulgar pen to transcribe the great mysteries of the law, and therefore this peculiar order of men was appointed to that purpose; but they did not so entirely apply themselves to it, as not to take in many other matters both of civil and religious concern, being public notaries in the Sanhedrim, and courts of justice, as well as registers in the synagogues. The office of the scribes of the clergy, was to teach in public, and instruct the people by expounding to them the law in their sermons and set discourses; by which practice, they grew into such repute in the Jewish state, that it was hard to say, whether the Pharisees, or they, were held in the greater veneration: For what the Pharisees gained among the common people by their pretences to extraordinary sanctity, these more justly obtained by their zeal for the written word, in preserving it from the dangers of corruption, and expounding it in the ears of the people.

It is supposed, with a good deal of probability, that the sect of the Essenes began about an hundred and fifty years before Christ, and during the persecution of Antiochus Euphianes, when great numbers of Jews were driven into the wilderness, where they inured themselves to a hard and

<sup>b</sup> Mark xii. 28. &c.

A. M.  
3841, &c.  
Ant. Chris.  
163, &c.  
from 1  
Macc. v. 1.  
2 Macc. x.  
11. and Jos.  
lib. 11. c.  
14. to the  
end of 1  
and 2 Macc.  
and of Jos.  
lib. 13.  
c. 19.



A. M. and laborious course of living. Why we find no mention  
 3841, &c. made of them in all the New Testament, the probable rea-  
 Ant, Christ son may be, that the major part of them lived in Egypt, at  
 163. &c. a considerable distance from Judea, which, at this time,  
 from 1 was infested with such persecutions, and intestine broils, as  
 Macc v. 1. were abhorrent to their retired and hermetic course of life,  
 2 Macc. x. which, as it secluded them from all places of great resort,  
 11. and might make them less curious to enquire after our Saviour's  
 Jos. lib. person and doctrine, thinking very probably, that if he  
 11. c. 14. was really the Messiah, he would not fail to seek and find  
 to the end of 1 and 2 out them; but that, if he was not, he had already ene-  
 Macc. and mies enough to oppose him, without their leaving the so-  
 of Jos lib. litary and contemplative life they were accustomed to,  
 13. c. 19. merely to bear testimony against him. Philo, who gives  
 us a full account of these people, tells us, that they were  
 called *Essenes*, from the Greek word *εσιος*, which signifies  
*holy*, and that there were two sorts of them: Some, who  
 living in society, and marrying, (though with a great deal  
 of wariness and circumspection,) lived in villages, and ap-  
 plied themselves to husbandry, and other innocent trades  
 and occupations, and were therefore called *practical*; but  
 others, who lived a kind of monastic life, gave themselves  
 wholly up to meditation, and was therefore called the *con-*  
*templative Essenes*: But however they differed in their man-  
 ner of life, they were both of the same belief, and follow-  
 ed the same maxims.

Their prin-  
 ciples.

They had not indeed the like traditions with the Pha-  
 risees, but as they were allegorists, they had several mysti-  
 cal books, which served them for a rule in explaining the  
 sacred writings, all of which (contrary to the Sadducees)  
 they acknowledged and received. They believed that God  
 governs the world, but by such an absolute predestination  
 of every thing, as allowed mankind no liberty of choice in  
 all their actions. They acknowledged a future state, think-  
 ing that the souls of good men went into the Fortunate  
 Islands, while those of the wicked were shut up in subter-  
 raneous places; but as for the resurrection of the body,  
 and the soul's returning to it again, after they were once  
 parted, of this they had no manner of notion. All  
 practical religion they reduced to these three kinds. 1.  
 The love of God. 2. The love of virtue. And, 3.  
 The love of mankind. 1. Their love of God expressed  
 itself in accounting him the author of all good, and, con-  
 sequently, applying to him every morning and night for  
 the

the blessings they wanted; in their abstaining from swearing, from lying, and all other sins that are abhorrent to his nature; and in their strict observance of the Sabbath, and all other holy rites, except sacrificing; for though they sent their gifts to the altar, yet they themselves went not thither, presuming, that the sanctity of their lives was the purest and most acceptable sacrifice to God that they could offer. 2. Their love of virtue was shewn in the government of their passions, their refraining from pleasures, their contempt of riches, their abstinence in eating, their continence, their patience, the simplicity of their speech, and the modesty of their carriage. And, 3. Their love of mankind appeared in their great benevolence and strict justice; their charity to the poor, and hospitality to strangers: and there needs no other proof of their love to one another, than the union in which they lived. For they had the same houses, the same provisions, the same habits, the same tables; their gains were put in the common stock; they divided the care of the sick among them; and honoured the elder men of their society with the same reverence, as if they had been their fathers.

This strictness and regularity of theirs gave them an eminent character, and made it a matter of no small consequence to be admitted into their society. For when, after a due course of probation, any one presented himself for that purpose, they bound him under the most solemn vows and protestations, "To love and worship God, and do justice to all men; to profess himself an enemy to the wicked, and a friend to the lovers of virtue; to keep his hands from theft, and all fraudulent dealings, and his soul unpolluted with the desire of unjust gain; not to usurp upon his inferiors, nor distinguish himself from them by any ornaments of dress or apparel; not to conceal any of the mysteries of religion from his brethren, nor to disclose any to the profane, though it were to save his life; but to preserve the doctrine he professed, the books that were written of it, and the name of those from whom he had it." This was the form of admission into their communion, which whoever violated, in any gross instance, was immediately excluded, and never received again, without the deepest humiliation and repentance. And if such was the religion and manner of life of the Essenes, we have less reason to be surprised, at our finding some authors so much extolling

A. M.  
3841, &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
163, &c.  
from 1  
Macc. v. 1.  
2 Macc.  
x 11. and  
Jof. lib. 11.  
c. 14. to the  
end of 1  
and 2 Macc.  
lib. 13 c.  
19.



A. M. tolling their courage and magnanimity upon several occasions, as persons who, under distresses and persecutions, suffered death, and the most grievous torments, even with joy and chearfulness, rather than say or do any thing contrary to the law of God. They are said, however, to have greatly degenerated from their primitive purity of life and doctrine. In the time of Trajan and the reign of Justinian, though they were known under the pompous title of *angels* or *angelic persons*, yet were they found to come infinitely short of the beings whose names they assumed, and, upon that account, falling into great disesteem, in a very short time \* they dwindled into nothing.

The Herodians.

There was another sect among the Jews, <sup>k</sup> mentioned in the gospels, which, though of later original, may not improperly be considered in this place, and that is the Herodians <sup>†</sup>, who, in their main principles, were not very different from the Sadducees. They sprang up, no doubt, in the time of Herod the Great, some twenty or thirty years before Christ, and had their denomination from him; but upon what account is not so well agreed. The common opinion is, that they looked upon Herod as the promised Messiah: But it is a very improbable thing, that any Jew should, in the time of our Saviour's ministry, above thirty years after the death of Herod, hold him to have been the Messiah, when they had found no one of those

<sup>i</sup> Basnage's History of the Jews, lib. 2. c. 13.

\* Some indeed are of opinion, that these Essenes did renounce Judaism, and were converts to Christianity; and that such among them as were called *Therapeutæ* became monks, and were formed into that order by St Mark, who was the first founder of the Christian church in Alexandria. But though it seems not unlikely, that some of this sect might be converted, yet, that the main body of them should embrace Christianity, and so be lost in the societies of Christian hermits, is far from being probable; especially since we find no traces of any such institution as monkism till after the beginning of the second century, when these Ascetics, who had formerly fled from persecution, finding the sweets of their retirement and solitude, began to multiply, and so erected themselves into bodies; *Prideaux's Connection*, anno 107.; and *Basnage's History of the Jews*, lib. 2. c. 13.

<sup>k</sup> Matth. xxii. 16. Mark iii. 16. Chap. viii. 15. Chap. xii. 13.

<sup>†</sup> Accordingly St Mark (chap. viii. 15.) calls that *the leaven of Herod*, which Christ styles *the leaven of the Sadducees*, Matth. xvi. 6.

those particulars which they expected from the Messiah performed by him, but rather every thing quite contrary. <sup>A. M. 3841, &c. Ant. Chris. 163. &c.</sup> Others therefore suppose, that they were called *Herodians*, because they constituted a sodality (or club as we call it) in honour of Herod at Jerusalem, as there were several in Rome in honour of their emperors \*. But, since the earliest of these sodalities in Rome were not instituted till after the death of Augustus, who out-lived Herod sixteen years and upwards, this could be no pattern or foundation for the institution of the like in memory of Herod, who died so long before. <sup>from 1 Macc. v. 1. 2 Macc. x. 11. and Jos. lib. 12. c. 14. to the end of 1 and 2 Macc. and of Jos. lib. 13. c. 19.</sup>

Herod, no doubt, came into the government with great opposition, and, as he was by birth a foreigner, and had made his entrance with much blood, his title was not acknowledged by the greater part of the Jews, especially as long as Antigonus was alive. Those, therefore, that would own his title, and espouse his interest, might, for this reason, perhaps, go under the name of *Herodians*; but this seems not to be the whole of the matter. Our blessed Saviour cautions his disciples <sup>m</sup> *against the leaven (i. e. against the evil and erroneous tenets) of Herod*; which seems to imply, that Herod himself was the author of some false notions, which constituted a particular sect differing from the other sects of the Jews; and that his followers, imbibing these principles from him, had the denomination of *Herodians*. <sup>n</sup> Forasmuch, then, that Herod <sup>o</sup>, the better to secure his possession of the throne, had put himself under the Roman protection, <sup>p</sup> contrary to an express precept of the law; and, to ingratiate himself with the great men at Rome, built temples, and erected images in them for idolatrous worship, excusing himself to the Jews, that all this he did purely in compliance to the commands he was necessitated to obey, and might probably lay it down for a maxim in religion, that, in case of compulsion, it was lawful to submit to unjust injunctions; there is no wonder at all that some bold men should rise up to

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<sup>1</sup> Scaliger in animadver. ad Eusebii chron. et Casaubon. exercit. &c.

\* Such were the Augustales, Adrianales, Antonini, &c. constituted in honour of Augustus, Adrian, and Antoninus, and the rest of the emperors, after their death; *Prideaux's Connection*, anno 107.

<sup>m</sup> Mark viii. 15.

<sup>n</sup> *Prideaux's Connection*, anno 107.

<sup>o</sup> Joseph. Antiq lib 15. c. 12.

<sup>p</sup> Deut. xvii. 15.

A. M. justify the king's practice, and (by the royal permission)  
 3841, &c. call themselves by his name, whose distinguishing tenet  
 Ant. Chrif. might probably be, "That although they professed the  
 163, &c. "Jewish religion, and abominated idolatry in their hearts,  
 from 1 "yet, to humour the Romans, and make themselves easy  
 Macc. v. 1. "with their governors, it was not unlawful to comply  
 2 Macc. "with their demands, and, at least outwardly,  
 x. 11. and "sometimes with their demands, and, at least outwardly,  
 Jof. lib. 12. "to become occasional conformists." This is the leaven  
 c. 14. to the "of the Herodians, which our Saviour cautions his disciples  
 end of 1 "against; but it was not of long continuance in the Jewish  
 and 2 Macc. church: For Herod Antipas<sup>a</sup> having lost his credit at  
 lib. 13 c. Rome, and being deposed and banished out of Judea, the  
 19. sect that was instituted by his father, and supported by his  
 favour and countenance, could not support itself after his  
 disgrace.

Zealots.

Another sect, mentioned by Josephus<sup>r</sup> as rising after this time, was that of Judas of Galilee: For when Archelaus, son of Herod the Great, was sent into banishment, and Judea reduced to a Roman province, Judas<sup>†</sup>, a native of Galamala, took occasion from some new exactions, to exhort his countrymen to shake off the Roman yoke; pretending, that to pay tribute to any foreign power was a shameful badge of their slavery. An aversion to the Roman dominion, and an hatred of the publicans, (who had the care of receiving the taxes and tributes,) was natural enough to all the Jews; but they, whose zeal led them to join Judas, and form a particular sect, valued themselves upon their holiness and justice, because they would not acknowledge any other sovereign but God; and, rather than submit to the dominion of man, or give him the title of *Lord*, they chose to subject themselves to any torments, or even to death itself. Judas indeed perished, *and all, as many as obeyed him, were dispersed for a while*; but in the time of the Jewish wars they gathered again, and soon became a faction strong and considerable enough to put every thing in confusion. They affected the title of *Zealots*, (says<sup>s</sup> Josephus,) as if their undertakings had been good and honourable, even while they outdid the very worst of men  
 in

<sup>a</sup> Basnage's History, lib. 2. c. 14.  
 lib. 18.

<sup>r</sup> Joseph. Antiq.

<sup>†</sup> Augustus furnished him with a plausible pretence for it, by issuing out his edict to have the whole province of Syria new surveyed, and taxed about this time.

<sup>s</sup> De bello Jud. lib. 4.



in wickedness. They looked upon themselves indeed, as the true successors of Phinehas, <sup>A. M. 3841, &c.</sup> who, out of zeal for the honour of God, did immediate execution upon Zimri and Cosbi, for which he received the divine thanks and approbation. And, in imitation of him, these men took upon them to execute judgment upon such as they called notorious offenders, without staying for the ordinary formalities of law. And therefore, they made no scruple of robbing, and plundering, and killing the principal of the nobility, under pretence of their holding correspondence with the Romans, and betraying the liberty of their country. At last, joining with the Idumæans, they committed all manner of outrage, seized on the temple, and profaned the sanctuary, and slew many of the high-priests themselves. So that, when Jerusalem came to be besieged, they were perpetually raising tumults and distractions within, which ended at last in the destruction of their city and temple, and the total dissolution of their state.

<sup>Ant. Chris. 163, &c.</sup>  
from 1  
Macc. v. 1.  
2 Macc. x.  
11. and Jos.  
lib. 12. c.  
14. to the  
end of 1  
and 2 Macc.  
and of  
Jos lib 13.  
c. 19.



These were the several sects, which, much about this period of time, sprang up in the Jewish church; and, if the like differences in opinion have since appeared in the Christian, it is no more than what the Spirit of God has foretold: <sup>u</sup> *For there must be heresies among you, that they who are approved, may be made manifest among you,*

## CHAP. V.

*From the Death of John Hyrcanus, to the Birth of Jesus Christ.*

## The HISTORY.

<sup>A. M.</sup>  
3897, &c.  
<sup>Ant. Chris.</sup>  
107, &c.  
from Jos.  
lib. 13.

**H**Yrcanus, when he died, left five sons: Aristobulus, Antigonus, and Alexander, were the three first; <sup>c. 19. to</sup> who the fourth was, we no-where read; but the name of <sup>the end of</sup> the fifth was Absalom. Aristobulus, as eldest, succeeded <sup>lib. 15.</sup> his father, both in the pontificate and principality of the nation, and (as we said before) was the first in Judea, since the Babylonish captivity, who put on a diadem, and assumed the title of a king; but he was a man of a bloody and suspicious disposition. His own mother, because, in

<sup>Aristobulus</sup>  
succeeds his  
father,  
makes him-  
self king of  
Judea, but  
murders his  
mother and  
brother,

R 2

virtue

<sup>u</sup> Numb. xxv. 13.<sup>u</sup> 1 Cor. xi. 19.

A. M.  
3897, &c.  
Ant. Chr. f.  
107, &c.  
from Jos.  
lib. 13.  
c. 19. to  
the end of  
lib. 15.

virtue of his father's will, she claimed some share in the sovereignty, he first cast into prison, and there starved to death. All his brothers he put under the like confinement, except Antigonus, who was his great favourite, and, at first, shared in the government with him; but he soon cooled in his affections, and at last had him put to death; though, in this piece of cruelty, the instruments about him were more to blame than he.

As soon as he was settled in the throne, he engaged in a war with the Ituræans †; and having subdued the greatest part of them, he forced them to become proselytes to the Jewish religion, in the same manner as his father had done to the Idumæans; but returning sick from the war to Jerusalem, he left his brother behind him to finish it, which accordingly he did with success; and so returning in triumph, at a time when the feast of tabernacles was celebrating, he went directly to the temple (as did the guards that attended him) with his armour on, to pay his devotions to God.

The queen, and the courtiers of her party, who envied the interest which Antigonus had with the king, were always buzzing in his ears such stories as they thought would excite his jealousy; and now they come and tell him, "That it was high time for him to look to himself; that his brother was gone into the temple in an equipage not becoming a private man; and that, in all-probability, it would not be long before he would come with a troop of his armed soldiers, and execute his wicked design against him."

This representation made some impression upon Aristobulus, so that he sent to his brother to put off his armour, and immediately come to him; concluding, that if, pursuant to his orders, he came unarmed, there was no mischief intended, but that if he did otherwise, there might be something in what the queen had suggested; and therefore placing his guards in a subterraneous passage, which led

† Ituræa, the country where these people dwelt, was part of Cœlo-Syria, bordering upon the north east part of the land of Israel, and lying between the inheritance of the half tribe of Manasseh beyond Jordan, and the territories of Damascus. It is the same country that is sometimes called *Auronitis*, and had its name from Itur, one of the sons of Ishmael, Gen. xxv. 15. who, in our English version, is wrongfully called *Jetur*; *Prideaux's Connection*, anno 107.

led from the palace \* to the temple, and through which his brother was to come to the king's apartment, he ordered them, that, if he came unarmed, they should let him pass, but if otherwise, they should instantly fall upon him, and dispatch him.

A. M.  
3897. &c  
Ant. Chris.  
107, &c.  
from Jos.  
lib. 13.

The queen knowing this, prevailed with the messenger whom Aristobulus sent to bid his brother come unarmed, to tell him, on the contrary, that the king being informed of a very beautiful suit of armour which he had brought with him from the wars, was minded to see how it became him, and therefore desired him to come in it; which accordingly he did, suspecting no ill. When he came to the place where the guards were posted, they, seeing his armour on, executed their orders, and immediately slew him; but, no sooner was the fact committed, than Aristobulus severely repented it.

c. 19 10  
the end of  
lib. 15

For the sense of the loss of a good brother brought to his remembrance the murder of his mother, and his conscience flew in his face for both at once. The anxiety of his mind increased the distemper of his body; so that, finding no ease for the one, and no cure for the other, in the utmost agonies of guilt, and with many bitter accusations of himself, he gave up the ghost, † and, after

Dies miser-  
ably, and is  
succeeded  
by his bro-  
ther Alex-  
ander.

\* When Hyrcanus built the palace of Baris, he caused this passage, which led from thence to the temple, to be made, that upon all occasions he might have a ready communication with it: and as over this passage there was a turret, or tower of the palace, called *Straton's tower*, Josephus tells us a very remarkable story concerning it, viz. That one Judas, an Essene, having foretold that Antigonus should, that very day, be slain in Straton's tower, which he took to be a town so called, lying on the sea coast, and two days journey from Jerusalem; and seeing Antigonus come into the temple, he fell into a great passion, and began to exclaim against truth itself, as supposing his prediction impossible now to be fulfilled: but, while he was in this agony, news being brought, that Antigonus was slain in that part of the subterraneous gallery which was directly under the turret called *Straton's tower*, the Essene rejoiced in the comfort and satisfaction of having his prophecy verified, at the same time that every one else was lamenting the murder of this young prince; *Jewish. Antiq. lib. 12 c. 19.*

† Aristobulus was a great favourer of the Greeks, for which reason he was called *Philellen*; and the Greeks indeed had an equal favour for him: For, as Josephus tells us out of Strabo,

one



A. M. 3897, &c. after a reign of no more than one year, was succeeded by his brother Alexander Jannæus.

Ann. Chr. f. 107, &c. Ever since his father's death, he had been kept in prison by the late king; but, upon his decease, his widow from Jos. lib. 13.

c. 19 to the end of their confinement; so that, being now on the throne, and lib. 15.

having discovered that the elder of these brothers had formed a design to supplant him, he caused him to be put to death; but the other, who was called Absalom, desiring to live quietly, and in a private condition, he took into his favour, and under his protection.

Alexan- As soon as he had settled his matters at home, he led der's war forth his forces to make war with the people of Ptolemais; with the and, having vanquished them in a pitched battle, shut people of them up in the city, and laid close siege to it. This place, Ptolemais, and Gaza, together with the tower of Straton, and the fortrefs of Dura, which Zoilus possessed, were the only places on the coast, which were not under Alexander's dominion; and therefore, dividing his forces, with one part he besieged Ptolemais, and employed the other in ravaging the territories of Zoilus, and those of Gaza. In the mean time, the besieged had sent to Ptolemy Lathyrus \*, the expelled king of Egypt, who reigned then in Crete,

one of their historians has left his character of him:—‘ That he was a prince of equity, and had in many things been very beneficial to the Jews, in that he had augmented their territories, and ingrafted into the Jewish state part of the nation of the Ituræans;’ but the actions of his short reign shew him to have been a man of a quite different disposition; *Prideaux's Connection, anno 106.*

\* This Ptolemy Lathyrus, by his mother Cleopatra, was made King of Egypt; by his affecting to reign without her, he so far incurred her displeasure, that she procured his expulsion by this artifice.—Some of her favourite eunuchs she caused to be wounded; and then bringing them out into the public assembly of the Alexandrians, she there pretended, that they had suffered this from Lathyrus, in defence of her person against him, and thereupon accused him of having made an attempt upon her life; and by this means she so far incensed the people, that they rose in a general uproar against him, and would have torn him in pieces, had he not fled for his life. Hereupon Cleopatra sent for Alexander, her younger son, who for some time had reigned in Cyprus, and having made him king of Egypt, forced Laythrus to be content with Cyprus, upon his brother's leaving it; *Justin, lib. 39. c. 4.*

Crete, to come to their relief; but afterwards, bethinking themselves better, they came to a resolution, (which they communicated to Ptolemy,) to trust to their own strength, rather than admit of any auxiliaries.

A. M.  
3997, &c.  
Ant. Chris.  
107, &c.  
from Jos.  
lib. 13.  
c. 19. to  
the end of  
lib. 15.

Ptolemy however was already set to sea, when he heard this news; and therefore proceeding in his voyage, and landing his army in Phœnicia, he advanced towards Ptolemais: But the people in the town would neither receive his messengers, nor send him any answer, so that he was in no small perplexity what course to take, when Zoilus, and the Gazeans sent ambassadors, desiring his assistance against Alexander's forces, which they were not able to oppose.

Ptolemy, being very glad of any opportunity to make an honourable retreat from before Ptolemais, readily marched his army to their relief; but Alexander, not thinking it adviseable to hazard an engagement with him, withdrew his army into their quarters, and there thought to gain by policy, what he could not attain by force.

To this purpose he entered into a treaty with Lathyrus, and engaged to pay him four hundred talents of silver, on condition, that he would deliver Zoilus, and his territories, into his hands, which Lathyrus agreed to do, and, accordingly had got Zoilus into his custody; but when he came to understand, that at the same time Alexander was clandestinely treating with Cleopatra, to bring her upon him with all her forces, he, detesting such double dealing, broke off all friendship with him, and resolved to do him what mischief he could.

His persily  
to Ptolemy,  
who defeats  
his army,  
and wastes  
his coun-  
try.

The two armies therefore met the next year, and a very fierce battle ensued near Asophus, not far from the river Jordan, wherein Alexander being vanquished, lost thirty thousand of his men, besides those that were taken prisoners. After this victory, Ptolemy made everywhere great havock, and spread the terror \* of his name throughout all

\* There is a very cruel and barbarous act, which he is said to have done at this time, viz. that, coming with his army in the evening after the victory, to take up his quarters in the adjoining villages, and finding them full of women and children, he caused them to be all slaughtered, and their bodies to be cut in pieces, and put in caldrons over the fire to be boiled, as if they had been for supper; that so he might leave an opinion in that country, that his men fed upon human flesh, and

A. M. 3997, &c.  
A. C. 307. &c.  
from Jos. lib. 13.  
c. 19. 10  
the end of  
lib. 15

all the province ; but his mother Cleopatra being fearful, lest so much success should make him powerful enough to invade Egypt, set out with a large fleet, and a numerous army, which she landed in Phœnicia, and thence proceeded to Ptolemais, expecting that the people would have opened their gates to her ; but finding the contrary, she invested the place to take it by force ; while Ptolemy, believing that it would be easy for him to recover Egypt in the absence of his mother and her army, left Syria, and went upon that expedition ; but meeting with more opposition than he expected, he was obliged to return to Gaza, where he passed the winter, and from thence went back again to Cyprus.

He makes  
an alliance  
with Cleo-  
patra,  
queen of  
Egypt.

As soon as Cleopatra had taken Ptolemais, Alexander went thither with considerable presents, and was kindly received as an unhappy prince, who was Ptolemy's enemy, and had no other refuge but the queen's protection : And therefore when some about her suggested, that now she had an opportunity to seize on him and his dominions, Ananias, one of her generals, who by birth was a Jew, and by descent a relation to Alexander, by representing to her the danger and injustice of such a procedure ; how base and injurious to her own honour, which for no considerations whatever ought to be tarnished ; how prejudicial to her interest, by provoking all the Jews in the world against her ; and how contrary to the rules of faith and common honesty, which are observed among all mankind, it would be to treat a friend and ally in this manner ; he prevailed with her to desist from all thoughts of it, so that, having concluded an amicable alliance with Alexander, she returned with her army to Egypt.

As soon as the country was clear of these foreigners, and Alexander had recruited his shattered forces, he marched into Cœlo-Syria, where (after a siege of ten months) he took Gadara, and, after that, the strong fortress of Amathus, where Theodorus, the son of Zeno, prince of Philadelphia, had laid up all his treasure : But Theodorus falling suddenly upon him, as he was returning from the conquest, not only recovered his treasure again, but slew ten thousand of his men, and took all his baggage from him.

All

and thereby create the greater dread and terror of his army. This barbarous cruelty Strabo and Nicholaus (as Josephus tells us) make mention of ; *Jewish. Antiq. lib. 13 c. 21.*



All these misfortunes however did not discourage this prince. The next year he marched his forces again over the Jordan; and after having taken some neighbouring places, came, and sat down before Gaza, with a design, if he took it, to use the people with the utmost severity; but Apollodorus, who commanded the town, made a gallant defence, and in a sally with twenty thousand of his men, one night fell so furiously upon Alexander's camp, that he had like to have ruined him and his whole army; but as soon as the day appeared, the Jews, discovering who they were, (for they thought in the dark that Lathyrus was come again to the assistance of Gaza,) rallied again, and repulsed the Gazeans into the city, with the loss of a thousand of their men.

A. M.  
3897, &c.  
Ant. Chriſt.  
107, &c.  
from Joſ.  
lib. 13 c.  
19. to the  
end of lib.  
15.

Belieges  
Gaza, and  
puts the in-  
habitants  
to the  
sword.

The city however still held out, till Lyſimachus envying the credit and esteem which his brother Apollodorus had gained in the defence of the place, treacherously slew him, and then as treacherously delivered up the city to Alexander; who, as soon as he had got possession of it, let loose his soldiers upon it, with a full licence to kill, plunder, and destroy, which produced a sad scene of barbarity. The Gazeans, thus finding that they were to have no quarter stood upon their defence, and sold their lives at so dear a rate, that in the carnage and sacrifice of the place, Alexander lost as many men of his own, as he killed of the enemy; but had the horrid pleasure, before he went away, to see this ancient and famous city reduced to utter ruin and desolation.

When he returned to Jerusalem, he was far from finding matters there in any peaceable posture. For, in the feast of tabernacles, while he was offering the usual sacrifices as high-priest, the people, who were assembled in the temple, had the insolence to pelt him with citrons, (for during the festival it was a custom among the Jews to carry \* branches of palm-trees, and lemon-trees in

Is insulted  
and hated  
by his own  
subjects,  
who run  
into open  
rebellion a-  
gainst him.

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S

their

\* The word in the original is *Attrog*, which the Jews imagine to have been *the forbidden fruit*, that our first parents eat in paradise. It very much resembles a citron or lemon, except that it has a very rough and uneven rind, which they fondly imagine, was originally occasioned by Eve's impressing her teeth on it, and that these marks it has still retained. The custom of carrying these in their hands is in testimony of their joy, but on the seventh day, which closes the festival, they break their branches, and throw them away; and therefore it is supposed, that

A. M.  
3897 &c.  
Ant. Chrii.  
107, &c.  
from Jof.  
lib. 13. c.  
19, to the  
end of  
lib. 15.

their hands) and to give him very opprobrious language, telling him, that he was a slave \*, and unworthy to go up to the holy altar to offer solemn sacrifices, which enraged him to such a degree, that he fell upon them with his soldiers, and slew six thousand of them. After this he surrounded the court of the priests, wherein the altar and the temple stood, with a wooden partition, to hinder the people from coming near him, while he was officiating, and to secure his person against all future attempts, he took guards into his pay from Pisidia, and Cilicia, (for he durst not trust his own countrymen,) and of these he had six thousand always about him.

Having thus, in some measure, laid the storm at home, he marched his forces against the Moabites and Ammonites, and made them become tributary to him. He attacked again the fortress of Amathus; but Theodorus, not daring to stand his coming, had removed his treasure, and withdrawn the garrison, so that he took it without opposition: But in his war with Thedas, an Arabian king, he had not the like success; for falling into an ambuscade, which that prince had laid for him near Gadara, he there lost most of his army, and not without some difficulty escaped himself.

This loss, added to the hatred which the Jews had conceived against him, made them fly out into an open rebellion, so that here a civil war commenced, which lasted for six years. In most encounters he had the advantage of his subjects; but so exasperated were they against him, that he could never bring them to submit: For having one day asked them, what they would have him do to please them, they all with one voice replied, ‘ That he should cut his own throat; for upon no other terms  
‘ would

that it was on this day, when the mutinous multitude pelted the high-priest with these *Attrogs*, which, at this time, were very common in Palestine; *Universal History*, lib. 2. c. 11.

\* In this they alluded to what Eleazar, a leading Pharisee, had said to his father Hyrcanus, viz. That his mother was a captive taken in the wars, and he, consequently, disqualified to be their high-priest; *vide* page 104. But the true reason of their exasperation against him was, that he followed his father’s steps, and not only gave countenance to the contrary sect, but continued the penal laws against those who should observe the traditions and customs introduced by the Pharisees; *Universal History*, lib. 2. c. 11.

‘ would they be at peace with him ; and well it were, A. M. 3897, &c.  
 ‘ (they said,) considering the great † mischiefs he had Ant. Chrif. 107, &c.  
 ‘ done them, if they could be reconciled to him, even af- from Jof. lib. 13.  
 ‘ ter he was in his grave ;’ and thereupon they ſent depu- c. 19. to the end of lib. 15  
 ties to Demetrius Euchærus, who was then king of Damaf-  
 cus, to deſire ſuccours from him againſt their ſovereign.

Demetrius, at their requeſt, came into Judea with an army of three thouſand horſe, and forty thouſand foot, Syrians and Jews. Alexander marched againſt him with ſix thouſand Greek mercenaries, and twenty thouſand Jews, who continued faithful to him ; but in the engagement he was quite vanquiſhed. All his foreign troops were loſt to a man ; and the greateſt part of his other forces was ſo miſerably broken, that he was forced to flee for ſhelter to the mountains, with the poor remnant he could get together.

This misfortune, which, in all appearance, muſt have totally ruined his affairs, proved the very means of re-eſta bliſhing them. Six thouſand of thoſe very Jews, who had ſo lately appeared in arms againſt him, when they ſaw him reduced to this diſtreſſed condition, were moved with compaſſion, and went over to him : And Demetrius, being content with the firſt advantage he had gained, or fearing perhaps that the reſt of the Jews would do the ſame, retired into Syria, leaving the rebels to make war againſt their king with their own forces.

In moſt of the conflicts that happened between them, Alexander defeated them, but ſtill he could bring them His ſucceſſes againſt them, and unheard of cruelty. to no terms of peace ; till at laſt, coming to a deciſive battle, he cut off the major part of them, and the reſt he ſhut up in a place called *Bethome*. This he beſieged, and took ; and having carried eight hundred of the rebels priſoners to Jeruſalem, he there cauſed them to be crucified all on one day, and their wives and children to be ſlain before their faces, as they were hanging on the croſſes, whiſt he made an entertainment for his wives and concubines near the place, where this ſcene of terror was

S 2

acting,

† The fourth book of the Maccabees (chap. xxix.) tells us, that this war was chiefly between the Pharifees and the Sadducees, and that Alexander, having declared himſelf againſt the former, had put fifty thouſand of them to death within the ſpace of ſix years, which ſo exaſperated the reſt, that they would hearken to no accommodation ; *Univerſal Hiſtory, lib. 2, c. 11.*



A. M.  
3897, &c.  
Ant. Chris.  
107, &c.  
from Jos.  
lib. 13. c.  
29, to the  
end of lib.  
15.

acting, with an intent chiefly to feast himself and them with this horrid sight. This was a savage and unheard-of cruelty: And, upon this occasion, the people of his own party called him *Thracides*, i. e. *as cruel as a Thracian*, as no man indeed could be bad enough to express so inhuman a procedure.

His death  
and politi-  
cal advice  
to his  
Queen.

After these civil wars were ended, Alexander led his army against the two kings of Damascus, Antiochus first, and afterwards Aretas \*, who, at different times, had invaded his kingdom. He took several strong places in the neighbouring territories, and, after an expedition of three years continuance, returned to Jerusalem, and was well received by his subjects. But that felicity he did not long enjoy: For having at a certain time drank to a great excess, he thereupon fell sick, and was afterwards seized with a quartan ague, which he was never able to shake off. This however did not interrupt his military undertakings, till, being quite exhausted, he was forced to submit to fate, while he was besieging the castle of Ragaba, in the country of the Gerasens. His queen Alexandra, who was with him at the siege, observing him to draw near his end, was exceedingly troubled at the ill state wherein she and her children should be left at his death. She knew how much he had exasperated the Pharisees, then a powerful sect among the Jews, and how great hatred the generality of the people, at their instigation, had contracted against them; and therefore she saw nothing else, but that she, and her family, would be given up to destruction, and made victims to the public rage; and thus she sat by his bedside, lamenting, and bemoaning herself, while he lay a-dying.

To ease her mind from these dismal apprehensions, the advice which he gave her was this:—<sup>a</sup> ‘That she should conceal his death till the castle was taken, and then, carrying his dead body with her, should lead back the army in triumph for this success; that, as soon as she was come to Jerusalem, she should send for some of the leading men of the sect of the Pharisees, lay his dead corpse before them, and tell them, that she resigned it wholly to their pleasure, either to treat it with

\* This Aretas was king of Arabia Petræa, but upon the death of Antiochus, was a chosen king of Damascus likewise.

<sup>a</sup> Joseph. Antiq. lib. 13. c. 23.

“ with indignity, (as his treatment of them had deserved,) A. M.  
 “ or to dispose of it as they thought fit; and, withal, that 3897, &c.  
 “ she should not forget to assure them, that, as her hus- Ant. Chris.  
 “ band had made her regent during her childrens minori- 107, &c.  
 “ ty, she would do nothing in the administration without from Jos.  
 “ their advice and participation.” lib. 13.  
 c. 19, t.  
 the end of  
 lib. 5.

After the reduction of Ragaba, Alexandra returned to Jerusalem in the manner that was prescribed, and in every thing else observed her husband's directions most punctually; which succeeded so well, that the usual invectives against him were changed into encomiums. All deplored the loss of so valiant a prince, and honoured his funeral with a more than ordinary pomp and solemnity; all pitied the queen-dowager, and, in obedience to her husband's will, settled her in the supreme government of the nation.

Alexander, when he died, left behind him two sons, The altera-  
 Hyrcanus and Aristobulus; but the regency he invested in tions and  
 the queen, who had indeed the name of the government: perfec-  
 but the administration was entirely in the power of the tions which  
 Pharisees. The first thing therefore that they did, was to the Phari-  
 have the decree of John Hyrcanus, against their tradition- sees occa-  
 ary constitutions, abolished; next to release all the pr- sion.  
 soners, and recal all the exiles that were concerned with  
 them in the late civil wars; and then to demand justice  
 against all those by whose instigation and advice the eight  
 hundred rebels above mentioned had been crucified.

To this purpose they exhibited articles against one Dio-  
 genes, a noted confident of the late king's; had him con-  
 demned and executed; and proceeded in like manner a-  
 gainst several others; so that the late king's friends and ad-  
 herents, seeing no end of these persecutions, went at length  
 to the queen in a body, with Aristobulus her younger son  
 at the head of them, to remonstrate against these proceed-  
 ings. They had been old officers to the king, and had  
 faithfully adhered to him in all his wars and difficulties;  
 and therefore they requested, that if no regard were to be  
 had to their services, they might at least be permitted to  
 depart the land, and seek their safety elsewhere, or else, to  
 be out of the reach of their enemies, might be sent into the  
 several garrisons of the kingdom: And to this last demand  
 of theirs the queen consented. The Jews  
 happily de-  
 livered  
 from their  
 apprehensi-  
 ons of Ti-  
 granes's in-  
 vading  
 them.

In the mean time news was brought to Jerusalem, that  
 Tigranes king of Armenia, with an army of five hundred  
 thousand

M. A.  
3841, &c.  
Ant. Chris.  
163, &c.  
from Jos.  
c. 19. to  
the end of  
lib. 15.

thousand men, had invaded Syria, and would in a short time be in Judea. Thus put the queen, and all the Jews, into a terrible fright; and therefore they immediately dispatched away ambassadors, with presents of great value, to court his friendship, and divert the storm. The ambassadors found him laying close siege to Ptolemais, and when they were introduced, (for he was a man \* of great pride and state,) he commended their forwardness in applying to him, accepted their presents, and assured them of his good inclinations. But the true reason of all this civility was, that Lucullus, the Roman general in pursuit of Mithridates, had entered Armenia, and was putting the country under military contribution, which obliged Tigranes to return home, and so delivered the Jews from the apprehensions of an invasion from that quarter.

A. M.  
3935, &c.  
Ant. Chris.  
69, &c.

Alexandra  
makes Hyr-  
canus her  
successor;  
but he is  
supplanted  
by Aristobu-  
lus.

Alexandra, when she was declared queen, made Hyrcanus high-priest, and left Aristobulus to lead a private life; but a private life was not agreeable to his aspiring temper. As soon therefore as he perceived that the queen was sick, and past all hopes of recovery, he privately in the night went out of Jerusalem, attended only with one servant; and having visited all the castles, in which, by his procurement, his father's friends had been placed in garrison, in fifteen days time he secured to his interest twenty of these fortresses, and thereby in a manner made himself master of the rest of the strength of the kingdom; so that when his mother died, (which was not long after his

\* This vain man assumed to himself the title of *King of kings*; and, to make his claim to it the better appear, having taken several petty princes prisoners in his wars with them, he made them wait on him as his domestic servants. He never went abroad but he had four of them to attend him; two running by him on one side of his horse, and two on the other; and thus, in like manner, he was served by some of them at his table, in his bed-chamber, and on all other occasions, but more especially when he gave audience to ambassadors; for then, to make the greater ostentation of his glory to foreign nations, he made all these captive kings, in the posture and habit of servants, to range themselves on each side of him. But, as proud as he was, when once he came to feel the power of the Roman arms, he was soon brought into such a state of mean and abject humiliation, that when he appeared before Pompey, he plucked his crown or royal tiara from off his head, and cast himself prostrate on the ground before him; *Plutarch in Lucullo et Pompeio.*



his departure from Jerusalem,) though she had declared his brother Hyrcanus her successor, he nevertheless met him in the plains of Jericho; But as the two armies were going to engage, most of the forces of Hyrcanus deserted, and went over to Aristobulus, which obliged Hyrcanus to come to a treaty with his brother; in which it was agreed, that he should make a resignation of the crown and high-priesthood to Aristobulus, and submit to live quietly upon his own private fortune; which accordingly was ratified by public sanction.

Hyrcanus was a quiet and peaceable man, a lover of retirement and ease, and therefore his resignation of the crown was not so great a grievance to him, as it was to some about him. Among these Antipater †, the father of Herod, surnamed the *Great*, was the chief; who having persuaded Hyrcanus, that, while he continued in Judea, his life was in danger, and that he had no other choice left, but either to reign or die, advised him to make his escape to Aretas King of Arabia, and with him to stipulate for forces for the recovery of his kingdom. Hyrcanus

A. M.  
3935, &c.  
Ant. Chriſt.  
69, &c.  
from Joſ.  
lib. 13.  
c. 19, to  
the end of  
lib. 15.

Hyrcanus  
aſſiſted by  
Aretas, de-  
ſeats Ari-  
ſtobulus,  
and they  
both appeal  
to Pompey.

† Eusebius and Julius Africanus tell us, that the father of this Antipater was an Heathen, and an inhabitant of Ascalon; that a company of robbers having pillaged a temple near Ascalon, took this young Antipater, the father of Herod the Great, who, at that time, was the priest of the temple, away with them; and that his father, being not able to redeem him, they carried him into Idumæa, where he settled, and made his fortune. But there is much more probability, that what Josephus, in the history of the Jewish wars, lib. 1. c. 5. tells us of this great man may be true, viz. that he was the son of another Antipater, who was made governor of Idumæa by Alexander Jannæus; and as to his religion, there is no question to be made, but that he was a Jew and circumcised; because the Idumæans had, long before, received circumcision and the religion of the Jews, even when Hyrcanus made a conquest of their country. This Antipater, having had his education in the court of Alexander Jannæus, and Alexandra his queen, who reigned after him, had wrought himself into the good graces of Hyrcanus, the eldest of their sons, in hopes to rise by his favour, when he should come to the crown after his mother; but when Hyrcanus was deposed, and Aristobulus made king in his place, all the measures which he had taken for his advancement were broken; and being too obnoxious to Aristobulus ever to have any prospect of favour from him, he thought himself obliged, both in his own interest and defence, to act the part we find he did; *Calmet's Dictionary*, under the word; and *Prideaux's Connection*, anno 65.

A. M.  
3935, &c.  
Ant. Chris.  
69, &c.  
from Jos.  
lib. 13  
c. 19. to  
the end of  
lib. 15.

canus did so; and upon condition that he would restore the towns, which his father Alexander had taken from him, Aretas supplied him with fifty thousand men, who, being joined with the Jews that were of Hyrcanus's party, gave battle to Aristobulus, and having obtained a complete victory, pursued him to Jerusalem, and thence to the mount of the temple, where they besieged him, and committed some outrageous acts \*. In the mean time, Scaurus, one of Pompey's lieutenants, being come with a Roman army as far as Damascus, Aristobulus took care, with the promise of four hundred talents, to engage him on his side; so that he sent to Aretas to withdraw his forces from Jerusalem, and threatened him with the Roman arms in case of refusal. Hereupon Aretas was forced to raise the siege and march off: But in his retreat Aristobulus fell upon his rear, and destroyed about seven thousand of his men.

Not long after this Pompey himself came into Syria, and took up his residence at Damascus, where he was attended with ambassadors from several nations, and, among the rest, Hyrcanus and Aristobulus sent their deputies, desiring both his protection and determination of the controversy depending between them. But when Pompey had heard what they both had to say, he ordered that the two brothers should appear in person before him, that so he might be better able to inquire into the merits of the cause, and determine it in such a manner as justice should direct.

The

\* One barbarous action of this kind is thus related by Josephus. — At this time there was at Jerusalem one Onias, a man of great reputation for the sanctity of his life, and who, by his prayers, had been thought to have once obtained rain from heaven in an extremity of drought. Upon a fond imagination therefore, that his curses would be as prevalent as his prayers, the besiegers brought him into the camp, and there pressed him to curse Aristobulus, and all that were with him. He opposed their request as long as he could; but at length, finding no rest from their importunities, he lifted up his hands to heaven, and, as he was standing in the midst of them, said, "O Lord God, Ruler of the universe, since both we, that stand here before thee, are thy people, and they that are besieged in the temple, are thy priests, I humbly beseech thee not to hear the prayers of either of them against the other." Whereupon they who brought him thither, were so enraged against the good man, that they fell upon him, and stoned him to death; *Jewish Antiq. lib. 14. c. 3.*

The two brothers accordingly waited upon Pompey to receive his decision; and, at the same time, several chief men of the Jews came to remonstrate against them both. The Jews pleaded, 'That it had been formerly the usage of their nation to be governed by the high-priest of the God whom they worshipped, who, without assuming any other title, administered justice to them, according to the laws and constitutions transmitted down to them from their forefathers. They owned indeed, that the two contending brothers were of the sacerdotal race, but then they alledged, that they had changed the old, and introduced a new form of government, in order to enslave the people, and thereupon they prayed that they might not be governed by a king.'

A. M.  
1935, &c.  
Ant. Chris.  
69, &c.  
rom Jos.  
lib. 13.  
c. 19, to  
the end of  
lib. 15.

Their  
pleadings  
on both  
sides.

Hyrcanus on his part urged, 'That, being the elder brother, he was unjustly deprived of his birthright by Aristobulus, who, leaving him only a small portion of land for his subsistence, had usurped all the rest, and, as a man born for mischief, practised piracy at sea, and rapine and depredation at land, upon his neighbours.' And for the attestation of all this, there appeared above a thousand of the principal Jews. What Aristobulus had to say, in answer to this, was, 'That Hyrcanus was superceded in the government, by reason of his incapacity to rule, and not through any ambition of his; that his sloth and inactivity had brought upon him the contempt of the people, and that therefore he was forced to interpose, merely to preserve the government from falling into other hands.' And, to witness the truth of this, he produced several young gentlemen of the nation, who by the gaudiness of their dress, and the levity of their carriage, did no great credit to the cause which they pretended to support.

Upon this hearing, Pompey could not but perceive the injury which Aristobulus had done his brother; but for the present he dismissed them with fair words, and referred the full determination of the matter, until himself should come to Jerusalem, which he would not fail to do, as soon as he had finished the Arabian war. Upon the whole, Aristobulus perceiving which way Pompey's discourse and inclinations tended, left Damascus without ever taking leave, and, returning to Judea, there armed the country in his defence. Pompey had soon done his business in Arabia, and thence coming to Judea, found, that, upon his approach, Aristobulus had shut himself up in the castle

Aristobulus  
takes up  
arms a-  
gainst Pom-  
pey, who  
conquers  
Jerusalem,  
and restores  
Hyrcanus.



A. M.  
5935. &c.  
Ant. Chris.  
69, &c.  
from Jos.  
lib. 13.  
c. 19. to  
the end of  
lib. 15.

of Alexandrion, which was a strong fortress, built by his father (and therefore called by this name) on an high mountain, that stood in the entrance of the country of Judea, towards the Samaritan side. Hither Pompey marched his army; and, having encamped before it, sent a messenger to Aristobulus to come down to him. Aristobulus, though with much reluctance, was forced to comply; and when Pompey demanded of him to deliver up his castles, and to sign orders to that purpose to all who commanded in them, he durst not refuse doing it, though he complained of the force that was thus put on him; and, as soon as he got out of Pompey's hands, fled to Jerusalem, and there prepared for war.

Pompey was not long before he marched after him; but when he drew near to Jerusalem, Aristobulus † repenting of what he had done, went out to him, and, endeavouring to reconcile matters with him, promised an entire submission for the future, and a considerable sum of money besides, if he would but withdraw his forces. Pompey accepted the proposal; and accordingly sent Gabinus, one of his lieutenants, with a body of men, to receive the money; but, when he came to Jerusalem, he found the gates shut against him, and was told from the walls, that those within would stand to no such agreement.

This was such treatment, that the Roman general, without any more to do, clapped Aristobulus (whom he had taken with him) in chains, and so marching forward with his whole army, was, by the prevalence of Hyrcanus's party, received into Jerusalem; but the other faction, retiring to the mount of the temple, broke down the bridges over the deep ditches and valleys that surrounded it, and so resolved to defend the place: But there was no withstanding a Roman army long. In three months time Pompey

† The fourth book of the Maccabees (chap. xxxvi.), says nothing of this submission of Aristobulus to the Roman general, but tells us, that Pompey marched directly against Jerusalem, where observing the situation of the place, the strength of its walls, towers, &c. he resolved to try to gain Aristobulus by fair means; that he invited him to come into his camp, and promised him all the safety that he could desire; that accordingly he came to him, and engaged to deliver up all the treasure of the temple, if he would but declare for him; but that the priests having refused to ratify the king's promise, this made the general lay siege to the temple; *Universal History, lib. 2. c. 11.*

pey \* became master of the mount, which he carried sword in hand; and, having made a dreadful carnage upon this occasion, he caused afterwards all such prisoners † to be put to death, as were found to have been the principal incendiaries of this war.

A M.  
3935, &c.  
Ant. Chr. l.  
69. &c.  
from Jos.  
lib. 13.

Before he left Jerusalem, he, with several other chief officers accompanying him, went into the temple, and caused the most sacred parts of it, even the holy of holies, (into which himself entered,) to be opened. He visited the treasuries likewise, where he found two thousand talents of silver, besides vessels, and other things of great value; but ‡ touching nothing of all this, he left it entire for the sacred uses to which it was appropriated. He thought it adviseable, however, to destroy the walls of Jerusalem; and though he restored Hyrcanus to the high-priesthood,

c. 19. to  
the end of  
lib. 15.

and  
\* It is supposed by Josephus, that the mount of the temple would have hardly been taken so soon by the Romans, had it not been for the superstition of the Jews in their observation of the Sabbath. Fortho' they now held it lawful to defend themselves vigorously on that day, yet they would not stir an hand to annoy the enemy, or obstruct them in any of their works. This Pompey observing, ordered his men to employ the Sabbath-day in nothing else but in making their approaches, wherein the besieged giving them no molestation, their engines of battery were brought forward, and without opposition placed just as they pleased; and so being fitted, and raised to advantage, soon made a breach in the wall large enough for an assault; *Josephus De bello Jud. lib. 1. c. 5.*

† Among these, it is supposed, that Absalom, a younger son of the famous John Hyrcanus, suffered; he had lived a private life, without meddling with public affairs, under the protection of his brother Alexander Jannæus: but having unhappily married his daughter to his nephew Aristobulus, he was, by that means, drawn into his son-in-law's party, and being taken prisoner, in all probability was put to death; because from that time we find no farther mention made of him; *Joseph. Antiq. lib. 14. c. 8; and Universal History.*

‡ But though Pompey was thus modest, yet Crassus soon after, coming that way, not only extorted the two thousand talents, and a large bar of gold, by way of bribe, to restrain him from farther plunder, but, contrary to the promise which he had given upon oath, ransacked the temple all over, and robbed it of every thing that he thought worth taking away, in-somuch, that the whole of his sacrilegious plunder amounted to the value of ten thousand talents, which is above two millions of our money; *Joseph. Antiq. lib. 14. c. 12. et De bello, lib. 1. c. 6.*

A. M.  
3935, &c.  
An: Chris  
69. &c.  
from Jos.  
lib. 13.  
c. 19. to  
the end of  
lib. 15

and made him prince of the country, yet he deprived him of all the new conquests which his predecessors had made; would not permit him to wear a diadem; and obliged him to pay an annual tribute to the Romans: And having thus regulated all matters, he set forward on his journey home, carrying with him Aristobulus, his two sons, Alexander and Antigonus, and two of his daughters, as captives, to be led before him in his triumph.

He at-  
tempts to  
raise fresh  
disturban-  
ces, but is  
prevented  
by poison  
at Rome.

Alexander, by the way, found means to make his escape; and, after three years, returning into Judea, gathered forces, and possessed himself of several places; but Gabinius, the Roman governor in Syria, defeated him in all his attempts, and then coming to Jerusalem, confirmed Hyrcanus in the priesthood; but the civil administration † he took from the Sanhedrim, and  
put

† Before this, the government had been managed, under the prince by two sorts of councils, or courts of justice; one consisting of twenty three persons, called the *lesser Sanhedrim*; and the other, of seventy-two, called the *greater Sanhedrim*. Of the first sort there was one in every city; only in Jerusalem (because of the greatness of the place) there were two, which sat apart from each other in two distinct rooms. Of the latter sort there was only one in the whole land. The lesser Sanhedrim dispatched all affairs of justice arising within the respective cities where they sat, and the precincts belonging to them. The great Sanhedrim presided over the affairs of the whole nation, received appeals from the lesser Sanhedrims, interpreted the laws, and, by new institutions from time to time, regulated the execution of them. All this Gabinius abolished; and, instead thereof, erected five courts, or Sanhedrims, and invested them all with sovereign power, independent on each other. The first of them he placed at Jerusalem; the second at Jericho; the third at Gadra; the fourth at Amathus; and the fifth at Sepphorus; and having, under these five cities, divided the land into five provinces, he ordered the inhabitants of each to repair to the court which he had there erected, and from which there was no appeal, except it was to Rome. Besides the two sorts of Sanhedrims above-mentioned, there was a third court among the Jews, which was not affected by any of these alterations, and that was the Court of three, instituted for the deciding all controversies about bargains, sales, contracts, and all other such matters of common right between man and man. In all which cases, one of the litigants chose one judge, and the other another, and these two chose a third, which three constituted a court to hear, and ultimately determine the matter in contest; *Talmud in Sanhedrim*; *Lightfoot's prospect of the temple*, chap. 20. and 22; and *Joseph. Antiq. lib. 14. c. 10.*



put into the hands of such magistrates as himself made choice of; and having divided the whole land into five provinces, appointed a court of justice (with power ultimately to determine every thing) over each of them. Aristobulus, late king of Judea, after he had been five years a prisoner at Rome, having with his son Antigonus made his escape, returned to Judea, with some few forces, which he had got together, was endeavouring to raise fresh troubles. But Gabinius came upon him before he was prepared to make a sufficient resistance; and having taken him and his son prisoners, sent them both again to Rome, where his father was kept in durance; but his children, upon the intercession of Gabinius, were immediately sent back to Judea.

Not long after this, the difference between Cæsar and Pompey occasioned a distraction in the Roman affairs, and a general contention all the empire over. Pompey had left some forces in Syria; and Cæsar, to oppose against these, had set Aristobulus at liberty, and proposed to have sent him with two legions into Judea, in order to secure that province: But before he could get out of Rome, he was poisoned by some of Pompey's party, and his body remained a long time there embalmed in honey, till M. Anthony procured it to be carried into Judea, where it was honourably interred in the royal sepulchre.

When Cæsar returned from the Alexandrian war, Antigonus, the second son of Aristobulus, (for Scipio, by Pompey's order, had caused his elder brother's head to be struck off at Antioch,) met him in Syria, and having complained of the hard fate which his father and brother had met with, he charged Hyrcanus and Antipater with having possessed themselves of the government by force; but Antipater, who was then with Cæsar, defended his own and Hyrcanus's cause so very well, that Cæsar, instead of restoring Antigonus, as he desired, made it a \* decree, that Hyrcanus

A. M.  
535 &c.  
Ant. Chris.  
69. &c.  
from Jos.  
lib. 13 c.  
19. to the  
end of lib.  
15.

Hyrcanus confirmed in the government of Judea by Julius Cæsar.

\* This decree, which at once abolished the aristocracy which Gabinius had lately set up, and restored the Jewish state to its pristine sovereignty, (according to Josephus,) runs in this form: 'Julius Cæsar, Emperor, the second time Dictator, and Pontifex Maximus, &c. Forasmuch as Hyrcanus, the son of Alexander, a Jew, has, at all times, as well in war as peace, appeared himself to be our good and trusty friend and ally, as appeareth by several attestations of unquestionable credit, &c.

These

A. M.  
3235, &c.  
Ant. Chriſt.  
69, &c.  
from Joſ.  
lib. 13. c.  
19 to the  
end of lib.  
15.

Hyrchanus ſhould hold the office of high-prieſt at Jeruſalem, and the principality of Judea with it to him, and thoſe of his family, in a perpetual ſucceſſion; (by which he reſtored the government to its ancient form, and aboliſhed the ariſtocracy which Gabinus had inſtituted,) and that Antipater ſhould be the procurator of Judea under him.

Herod's in-  
ſolent ar-  
rage and  
aſſumption  
of power.

This Antipater, who was a perſon, of great wiſdom, of powerful intereſt in ſeveral places, and in high favour with the Romans, had two ſons, Phafael and Herod; to the former of which he gave the government of the country about Jeruſalem, and to the other that of Galilee. Phafael behaved himſelf, in his adminiſtration, with great lenity; but Herod was a man of a different character, and his boiſterous temper made him leſs acceptable to the Jews.

At this time there was a gang of thieves that inveſted Galilee, and the neighbouring parts of Cœlo-Syria, whom Herod fell upon, and having taken one Hezekiah their ring-leader, with ſeveral of his aſſociates, put them all to death. Thoſe who envied the proſperity of Antipater, and the growth and greatneſs of his power, made this an handle to accuſe Herod to Hyrchanus for executing men without a legal trial, and obtained a citation from him to ſummon Herod to anſwer for it before the Sanhedrim. He came; but as he made his appearance in a purple robe, and ſurrounded with his guards, he ſo overawed that great council, that they all ſat ſilent without ſaying a word againſt him, until Simeas, a man of a great juſtice and integrity, roſe up, and with a becoming preſence of mind, complained, that he never ſaw a criminal appear in a court of juſtice ſo attended; that it looked as he meant to make the

‘ Theſe ſervices and good offices duly conſidered, I do hereby  
‘ confirm and eſtabliſh to him and his heirs, the perpetual go-  
‘ vernment of the Jews, both as their prince and high-prieſt,  
‘ after the manner and method of their own laws: and from  
‘ this day forward, enrol them among the number of my truſ-  
‘ ty and well beloved friends, and ratify an affinity with them  
‘ as my aſſociates. I ordain likewiſe, that all the legal pontifi-  
‘ cal rights and privileges be devolved upon him, and his ſons  
‘ for ever; and that in caſe any controverſy ſhall ariſe among  
‘ the people concerning the Jewiſh diſcipline, himſelf and his  
‘ family, in the courſe of ſucceſſion, ſhall be the only judge of  
‘ it; *Antiq. lib. 14. c. 17.*

the administration thereof more dangerous to the judges, than the malefactor: 'But this, (says he, turning to the high-priest,) is not so much to be imputed to his insolence, as to your connivance, which encourages it: Yet know, (continued he,) that his person whom you screen from the justice of the laws, will be a scourge to you all.' Nor was he in this a false prophet.

A. M.  
3935, &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
69, &c.  
from Jos.  
lib. 13.  
c. 19. to  
the end of  
lib. 15.

For Herod having, by the persuasion of the high-priest, for fear that the sentence of the Sanhedrim should pass against him, made his escape from Jerusalem, and retired to Damascus, where Sextus Cæsar, the præfect of Syria, then resided, and put himself under his protection, he so far insinuated himself with him, that for a sum of money, with which he presented him, he obtained the government of Cælo-Syria, where he soon raised an army, and marched it into Judea, with an intent to have deposed Hyrcanus, and cut off the whole Sanhedrim for the indignity they had put upon him by their late process; but his father Antipater, and his brother Phasael, met him, and dissuaded him from it; so that, for the present, he dropped his resentment.

As long as Julius Cæsar lived, the Jews were held in great honour and esteem by the Romans, and had several decrees passed in their favour: But † after his untimely death,

Antipater  
poisoned  
by Malchus,  
but his  
death re-  
venged by  
his sons.

† While Julius Cæsar was preparing for an expedition against the Parthians, in order to revenge the death of Crassus, and the Romans that were slain with him at the battle of Carrhæ, on the ides of March, *i. e.* on the fifteenth day of that month, four days before he intended to set out upon that expedition, he was murdered in the senate house by a conspiracy of the senators. This was the most villainous act, and the more so, because the prime authors of it, viz. Marcus Brutus, Decimus Brutus, Cassius, Trebonius, and some others of them, were the very persons whom Cæsar, in the highest manner, had obliged; yet it was executed under the notion of an high heroic virtue, in thus freeing their country from one, whom they called a *tyrant*; and the manner in which it was executed, is this:—As soon as he came into the senate-house, Attilius Cimber, who was one of the conspirators, presented himself (according as it was agreed among them) to demand his brother's pardon, who was banished; but upon Cæsar's refusal, under pretence of begging it with greater submission, laid hold of the bottom of his robe, and pulled him so hard, that he made him bend his back: Then Casca drew his dagger, and stabbed him in the shoulder, but the wound proved but slight, so that Cæsar



A. M.  
3935, &c.  
Ant. Chris.  
99, &c.  
from Jos.  
lib 13. c.  
29. to the  
end of lib.  
15.

death, their country became a prey to every hungry general of Rome. Cassius, having made himself master of Syria, exacted of the Jews above seven hundred talents of silver, which Antipater prevailed with his two sons to pay him, and so preserved himself the longer in the government of Judea. He was (as we said) procurator of the province under Hyrcanus; and the next man to him in power and authority was Malicus: But not being contented to be the second man next the prince, he would fain have been the first; especially since he was a natural Jew, and Antipater but an Idumean. Antipater had all along been his fast friend, and upon more occasions than one, saved his life: But he, like an ungrateful wretch, was continually laying plots against him; and, at length, taking the opportunity of his dining one day with Hyrcanus, he bribed the butler to give him poison in his wine, of which he died, and then, with an armed force, seized on the government of Jerusalem. Phasaël and Herod had, for a long time, suspected this traitor's design against their father, and when they heard of his death, they concluded that he was the author of it. They thought proper however to conceal their resentment for the present; but as soon as Herod found a fit opportunity, \* he had him taken off.

No

far fell upon him; but as they were scuffling, another of the conspirators came behind, and stabbed him in the side, Cassius, at the same time, wounded him in the face, and Brutus pierced his thigh. With much courage he still defended himself; but the blood he lost through so many wounds having much weakened him, he went to the foot of Pompey's statue, where he fell and expired, after having been stabbed in three and twenty places, by the hands of those whom he thought he had disarmed by his good offices; *Prideaux's Connection*, anno 44. and *Vertot's Revolution of Rome*, c. 13.

\* The matter was conducted thus:—Cassius being informed by Herod of the manner of his father's death, gave him leave to revenge himself on the murderer, and sent his orders to the forces, under his command at Tyre, to be assistant to him therein. On Cassius's taking Laodicea, all the princes and chief lords of Syria and Palestine hastened thither with their presents and congratulations. Hyrcanus together with Malicus and Herod, put himself upon the road for the same purpose; and as they drew near to Tyre, where they were to lodge that night, Herod invited all the company to sup with him; and sending his servants before, under pretence of providing the supper by them, he communicated the orders of Cassius to the

com-

No sooner was the death of Malicus, and the manner of it known at Jerusalem, but a party of his friends rose in arms to revenge it on the sons of Antipater; and having gained Hyrcanus, and Fœlix the commander of the Roman forces on their side, put the whole city in an uproar. Herod was then with Fabius, the Roman governor of Damascus, and there laid up with sickness; so that the whole storm fell upon Phasaël, which he weathered with full success: For he drove Fœlix, and all that tumultuous party out of Jerusalem, and when his brother recovered and returned, they both together soon quelled the faction, and would doubtless have resented the high-priest's behaviour upon this occasion with more severity, but that, at this time, a match was set on foot between Herod and his grand-daughter Mariamne †, which reconciled all differences. But though the faction was, for the present, suppressed, it was not long before it revived.

A. M.  
3935, &c.  
A. t. Christ.  
69, &c.  
from Jos.  
lib. 13.  
c. 19. to  
the end of  
lib. 15

After the defeat of Brutus ‡ and Cassius, by M. Anthony

The Jews  
in a body  
ny apply to  
Anthony  
against  
them, but  
are reject-  
ed.

commanders of the Roman garrison in the city, who accordingly sent out a party of armed men, that fell upon Malicus, as he drew near to the place, and slew him; *Joseph. Antiq. lib. 14. c. 10.*; and *De bello, lib. 1. c. 9.*

† She was the daughter of Alexander, the son of King Aristobulus, by Alexandra the daughter of Hyrcanus the Second, and therefore was grand-daughter to both these brothers. She was a lady of extraordinary beauty and great virtue, and in all other laudable qualifications, accomplished beyond most of her time; but the true motive for Herod's desiring to make her his wife, was, because the Jews, at this time, had a very zealous affection for the Asmonæan family: and therefore he thought, that by marrying this lady, he should the easier reconcile the hearts of the people to him; *Prideaux's Connection anno 38.*

‡ Philippi is a town of Macedonia, to the inhabitants of which St Paul wrote his epistle; but what made this place the most remarkable, was the famous battle that was fought near it, between the army under Octavianus and Anthony, and that under Brutus and Cassius, consisting of near an hundred thousand men each. Brutus and Cassius both commanded in the action; but Octavianus being sick in his tent, the command of the other army fell wholly upon Anthony. The forces commanded by Cassius were soon repulsed, so that he retired to an hill, there to wait for an account of that part of the army which was commanded by Brutus; But in the confusion and

A. M. 3935, &c.  
 Ant. Chris.  
 69, &c.  
 from Jos.  
 lib. 13  
 c. 19. 10  
 the end of  
 lib. 15.

ny and Cæsar Octavianus \* at Philippi, Anthony, coming into Asia, was attended by the deputies of most princes and states in that part of the world, and, among others, with several principal persons of the Jewish nation, who were sent to accuse Phasaël, and Herod, of usurping the government from Hyrcanus: But partly by money, and partly by interest, Herod had so far prevailed with Anthony, that he would not so much as hear them. This, however, did not discourage the Jews that were his enemies: For when Anthony came to Daphne near Antioch, an hundred of the most considerable among them waited upon him with the like complaints. Here Anthony gave them an hearing; and when he put it to Hyrcanus, whether the two brothers, or their accusers, were, in his opinion, fittest to govern the state under him, he gave it for the two brothers; and Anthony, being minded to do them a farther favour, made them both tetrachs †, and committed all the affairs of Judea to their administration. This he confirm-  
 ed

duſt, not being able to perceive what was doing, his mind miſ- gave him that Brutus was overcome, and thereupon he com- manded his ſervant Pindarus to cut off his head. Brutus, in the firſt day of action. was ſo ſucceſſful, that he made the enemy retire, and took Octavianus's camp; but in a few days after, coming to a ſecond engagement, he was entirely routed; and being loth to fall into the enemies hands, prevailed with his friend Strabo to diſpatch him: And what is very remarkable in theſe two mens deaths is, that they were both killed with the ſame ſwords wherewith they had murdered Cæſar: *Plutarch. De Bruto; Valerius Paterculus, lib. 2. c. 70.; Apion De bellis civilibus, lib. 4; and Dion Caſſius, lib. 47.*

\* Octavianus was the ſon of Caius Octavius, by Atia the daughter of Julia, ſiſter of Julius Cæſar; and therefore Julius adopted him (as being his nephew, and next male relation) to be his ſon; upon his uncle's death, he took upon him the name of Caius Julius Cæſar Octavianus, and by this name he was afterwards known, till that of Auguſtus, which was given after the victory at Actium, ſwallowed up all the reſt; *Pri- deaux's Conneſſion, anno 44.*

† This word, which ſometimes occurs in Scripture, and is pretty frequent among the deſcendents of Herod the Great, according to the force of the Greek, ſignifies a lord that has the fourth part of a ſtate, province, or kingdom, without wearing a diadem, or bearing the title of a king: But it muſt not always be underſtood in a rigorous ſenſe, becauſe the name of tetrach was given to him that poſſeſſed ſometimes an half, and ſometimes a  
 third



ed by letters to the Jews ; and to oblige them to obey what he had done, he detained fifteen of the hundred as hostages, and would have put them to death, had not Herod saved them by his intercession.

A. M.  
3935. &c  
Ant & Chris.  
69, &c,  
from Jos.  
lib. 13.  
c. 19. to  
the end of  
lib. 15.

This notwithstanding, they did not still give over their sollicitation ; but when Anthony came to Tyre, they sent a thousand of their principal men with the like accusations against the two brothers : But looking on this as a tumult, rather than embassy, he directed his soldiers to fall upon them, so that some of them were slain, and more wounded ; and at the same time, he sent a peremptory order to the magistrates to assist Herod in the recovery of his government. With this order Herod went to Jerusalem, and would have persuaded the people to receive him, by expostulating the danger of disobeying him, and provoking the Roman general ; but instead of regarding his threats or advice, they fell upon him ; and, by killing some, and wounding others of his attendants, so enraged Anthony against them, that he ordered their fifteen hostages to be put to death, and threatened a severe revenge against the rest.

In the mean time Antigonus, the son of Aristobulus, having had long before attempted to possess himself of Judea, but being defeated, and expelled by Herod, fled to Parthia, and was there kindly received and protected. After he had been there some time, and established an interest among the most considerable persons of that nation, he promised them a thousand talents, and five hundred of the finest women † in the country, if they would assist him in the recovery of his father's kingdom. The Parthians accepted of the proposal, and the king sent his general along with Antigonus, at the head of a powerful army, to invade Juda. As soon as they were entered the country, great numbers of the Jews joined them in their march ; and when they came to Jerusalem, the faction that hated

Antigonus,  
by the assistance of  
the Parthians gains  
the kingdom of  
Juda.

U 2

the

third part, of any principality ; nay, oftentimes the name of a king was given to him that was but a tetrach, and that of a kingdom, to a tetrarchy ; *Calmet's Dictionary*, under the word.

\* The fourth book of Maccabees (chap. 49.) says eight hundred women, the fairest and best bred in all the country ; But Josephus adds, that Antigonus was not able to make good his contract, by reason that Herod had seized on most of the fine women, and sent them away with his wife and family to Massada, a place of safe retreat ; whilst himself staid behind with his guards, to cover their march, and prevent their being pursued.

A. M. 3935, &c.  
Ant. Chris.  
69, &c.  
from Jos.  
lib. 13.  
c. 19. to  
the end of  
lib. 15.

the two brothers, declared for them : So that Herod, not being able to defend the city, especially after he found that Hyrcanus, and his brother Phasaël were taken by the Parthians, and put in chains, made his escape by night ; and, taking his mother Cypros, and his sister Salome, Mariamne his bride, and Alexandra the mother of Mariamne with him, made the best of his way to Massada, a prodigious strong fortress, built on the top of a very high mountain, near the west side of the lake Asphaltites ; and having furnished it with provisions for several months, he there left his mother, and the other women of quality, whom he had brought with him from Jerusalem, under the care and government of Joseph, another of his brothers, and so took his way to Petra in Arabia, hoping to procure some assistance from Malchus, who had succeeded Aretas, as king of that country : But before he reached Petra, he received a message from Malchus, desiring him to depart his dominions, because he was afraid he should offend the Parthians, who were his neighbours, if he should receive him.

The Parthians, when they found that Herod was gone from Jerusalem, after they had plundered the place, and the country round about, made Antigonus (as they had agreed) king of Judea, and delivered to him Hyrcanus, and Phasaël in chains. Phasaël knowing that his death was determined, put a voluntary end to his life and sufferings. For not having the liberty of his hands to dispatch himself, he beat out his brains against the wall of the prison, and Hyrcanus (to <sup>b</sup> incapacitate him from being any longer high-priest) had his ears cut off, and was then delivered back again to the Parthians, by them to be carried into the east, who, upon their return, left him at Seleucia.

Herod goes to Rome, and by the means of Anthony and Augustus obtains from the senate a grant of the kingdom of Judea.

Herod, having met with this unworthy treatment in Arabia, made what haste he could into Egypt; but when he came to Rinocorura, he there was informed of his brother's death, and in what manner he had effected it; from thence he went to Pelusium, and so to Alexandria, where he took ship, and after a voyage of no small danger and difficulty, landed at Brundisium, from whence he proceeded to Rome; and having acquainted M. Anthony with the miserable state of his affairs in Judea, he most earnestly prayed his aid.

Anthony,

<sup>b</sup> Lev, xxi. 18.—24.

Anthony, remembering his friendship which he had with his father first, and afterwards with him, and being exasperated against Antigonus, whom he always looked upon as an enemy to the Roman people, and not a little affected with the promises which Herod had made, of giving him a large sum of money, if ever he should be reinstated; not only warmly espoused his cause himself, but engaged likewise Octavianus (who was afterwards called *Augustus*) so closely in his interest, that, by the help and influence of those two men, the senate unanimously decreed, that Herod should be king of Judea, and Antigonus declared an enemy to the commonwealth. Having in the short space of seven days dispatched his affairs thus prosperously, he left Rome, and landing at Ptolemais, began to raise forces, with a design to march against Antigonus, who, ever since his departure, had besieged the fortress of Massada. With these, and such Roman auxiliaries as he received from Ventidius, Anthony's general, and Silo his lieutenant in Palestine, he made himself master of the greatest part of the country, took Joppa, relieved Massada, and, taking the castle of Ressa in his way, marched directly to Jerusalem, and there encamped on the west side of the city. Antigonus had provided the place with all warlike munitions, and a good garrison, which, with darts and stones from the walls, and flying parties frequently making excursions, very much infested Herod's army. Herod, in hopes of making easy work of it, sent an herald about the walls, to proclaim indemnity to all that would submit. Antigonus, on the contrary, directing his speech to Silo and the Romans, complained of the injustice they did him, in transferring the crown from him, who was of royal descent, to a plebeian, and half Jew, as Herod was: And from these, and such like reproaches on both sides, they came at length to acts of hostility, wherein Antigonus and his men behaved themselves so valiantly, that they soon drove the enemy from the walls.

Ventidius, indeed, had left Silo in Judea, to be assistant to Herod in the reduction of Jerusalem: but in his manner of managing the war (which was, to get great sums from Herod to promote his interest, and greater from Antigonus to hinder it) he did him more harm than good: for he did not only take all methods to squeeze him, but encouraged his soldiers likewise to mutiny, on pretence of wanting

A. M.  
3935. &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
69. &c.  
from Jos.  
lib. 13.  
c. 19. to  
the end of  
lib. 15

But is opposed by  
Antigonus,  
and but  
badly assisted  
by the  
Romans.



A. M.  
3935, &c.  
Ant. Chriſt  
69, &c.  
from Joſ.  
lib. 13  
c. 19. to  
the end of  
lib. 15

ing forage and provisions, more commodious quarters, and better pay; which when at any time Herod endeavoured to remedy, Antigonus, having notice of all that paſſed, with flying parties and ambuſcades, frequently intercepted and cut off the convoys that were deſigned for the united army: though Herod, who was as active and diligent as the enemy, very often came up with them, and purſued his advantage ſo cloſely, that, having with ſome difficulty recovered all Galilee from Antigonus, he, after that, betook himſelf to rid it of thoſe gangs \* of thieves and banditti, which at that time very much infeſted it.

All this while the ſiege of Jeruſalem went on but ſlowly; and Herod, perceiving that the Roman generals were very cool to his intereſt, was reſolved to go again to Anthony, (who was then beſieging Samofata, a city upon the Euphrates,) to make a representation of their behaviour. During his abſence, he left his brother Joſeph to command in Judea, giving ſtrict orders to put nothing to the hazard until his return; but Joſeph forgetting this, ventured upon an expedition againſt Jericho, where, being circumvented by the enemy, he was ſlain himſelf, and moſt of his forces cut to pieces; which gave thoſe that were diſaffected to Herod, both in Galilee and Idumæa, an opportunity of revolting. Anthony, when he heard that Herod was coming, drew out his army to receive him, and, while he ſtaid with him, ſhewed him all the marks of friendſhip and eſteem: but, deſigning himſelf to go into Egypt †, he left the army with Socius, ordering him to aſſiſt Herod upon

\* Theſe thieves had ſo ſheltered themſelves in the caves, and holes of the mountains, that it was no eaſy matter to come at them, becauſe the ſteepneſs and craggineſs of the mountains made it almoſt impoſſible, either to ſcale them from below, or from above to get down to them by any paſſage; and therefore (to ferret them out of their dens) Herod was forced to make certain large cheſts, and, filling them with ſoldiers, to let them down into the entrances of theſe caves by chains from engines which he had fixed above; by which means, he either deſtroyed all that lurked in them, or elſe reduced them to terms of ſubmiſſion; *Joſeph. Antiq. lib. 14.*

† Where Cleopatra, at this time, was queen; who, by the charms of her beauty and wit, had drawn him into thoſe ſnares which held him enſlaved to her as long as he lived, and, in the end, cauſed his ruin. She was a woman of great parts, and ſpake

upon all occasions; and he accordingly gave him two legions for the guard of his person, and marched after himself with the rest of the forces.

A. M.  
3935, &c.  
Ant. Chris.  
69, &c.  
from Jos.  
lib. 13.  
c. 19. to  
the end of  
lib. 15.

Upon his return from Anthony, Herod, while he was at Daphne, had an account of his brother's death and defeat, which made him hasten to mount Libanon, where he raised eight hundred of the natives, and with these and the Roman forces came to Ptolemais, and thence marching by night, he passed through Galilee, subdued all that came in his way, and forced the rest into their strong holds. But while he was hastening towards Jericho, with an intent to avenge his brother Joseph's death, a party of six thousand of the enemy came resolutely down the hills, and put the Romans into great consternation, beating back the van-guard, and pursuing them home to their camp, where they so warmly engaged them, that Herod himself was wounded in the conflict: but, not long after, when Antigonus, flushed with this success, had sent Pappus his general, with the main strength of his forces against him, he gave them an entire defeat, slew Pappus in the rout, and (had it not been for the severity of the winter, which was now approaching) had gone immediately to Jerusalem, and so made an end of the war: But that he was forced to refer to the operations of the next campaign.

When Herod came before Jerusalem, his own army consisted of about thirty thousand, to which Socius † brought

Herod besieges Jeru-  
salem takes  
Antigonus  
prisoner,  
and prevails  
with An-  
thony to  
have him  
put to  
death.

spake several languages (as well as Latin and Greek) very fluently; but then she was a person of great vices, and (among others) of such insatiable avarice and ambition, that she made a conscience of nothing if she could but get by it. Her brother, a youth of about fifteen years of age, she caused to be dispatched, and prevailed with Anthony to have her sister Arsinoe cut off at Ephesus, even in the temple of Diana. Anthony indeed was a man of a sweet temper, and great generosity, an eloquent speaker, and a complete master in all military abilities: but then, he was a great libertine in his way, and so eager in the pursuit of his unlawful pleasures, that he stuck at nothing to attain them; by which means he brought himself so absolutely under the command of this wicked and voluptuous woman, that (as Josephus expresses it) *she seems, not only to have captivated, but bewitched him; Prideaux's Connection, anno 30. and Joseph. Antiq. lib. 15. c. 4.*

† It is generally thought, that a legion was composed of ten cohorts; a cohort, of fifty maniples; a manipule, of fifty men, and

A. M.  
3935. &c.  
Ant. Chris.  
69. &c.  
from Jos.  
lib 13.  
c. 19. to  
the end of  
lib 15.

brought eleven legions of foot, and six thousand horse, besides the auxiliary troops of Syria. However the city held out several months with a great deal of resolution; but, at last, the besieged being beaten out of all their places of defence, and the enemy exasperated at the length and tediousness of the siege, all things were in the utmost confusion. Rapine and devastation was the general work; and death and slaughter raged every where, without distinction of age or sex. In vain did Herod endeavour to put a stop to this ravage and cruelty. "The spoils of the city, he was told, were the soldiers due, as a reward for their labour" and valour in taking it." So that, with a large sum of money, he was forced to preserve and redeem it.

Antigonus, seeing all lost, surrendered himself to Socius, and, in a submissive and abject manner, fell at his feet, imploring mercy: But Socius, insulting his meanness of spirit, and want of courage, had him put in chains; and so leaving Herod in full possession of the kingdom, took his prisoner along with him to Anthony. Anthony, at first, intended to have reserved Antigonus in order to grace his triumph; but Herod, not thinking himself safe in his kingdom, as long as this remainder of the royal family continued alive, never left soliciting him, till at length, by a good sum of money, he obtained that this poor prince should be put to death; and, with him ended the reign of the famous and illustrious house of the Asmonæans; (illustrious in itself, for the long continuance of the regal and sacerdotal succession in it, and no less famous for the many signal services which they and their ancestors, from time to time, had done the public,) after it had lasted, from the beginning of Judas Maccabæus to this time, one hundred and twenty nine years.

A. M.  
3978. &c.  
Ant. Chris.  
26. &c.

He re-  
venge  
himself  
of his ene-  
mies, makes  
his wife

Martha-  
ne's bro-  
ther, Ari-  
stobulus,  
high-priest  
and gets  
Hyrcanus  
into his  
power.

As soon as Herod had got full possession of the kingdom of Judæa, he began to revenge himself on all those whom he looked upon as his enemies; and, among these, put all the members of the great Sanhedrim to death, except

and consequently that a legion was a body of six thousand soldiers; but others are clearly of opinion, that it was an uncertain number, and contained sometimes four, sometimes five, and sometimes six thousand men; *Calmet's Dictionary*, under the word; and *Prideaux's Connection*, anno 37. in the notes.



cept Pollio † and Simeas, who, during the siege, were all along for delivering up the city to Herod, whereas all the rest opposed the motion, and did what they could to excite the people to that fierce and obstinate resistance which they made. All this while Hyrcanus was captive in Parthia; and, as the people wanted an high-priest, Herod's business was to chuse a man of obscurity to that office, who, having no credit or interest at Jerusalem, might not be capable (notwithstanding his high station and dignity in the church)

† They are so named by Josephus; but the Jewish writers generally call them *Hillel* and *Shammai*; and of Hillel, in particular, they give us this account, viz. That he was born in Babylonia, and there lived till he was forty years old; that when he came to Jerusalem, he betook himself to the study of the law, in which he grew so eminent, that, after forty years more, he became president of the Sanhedrim, and that in this office he continued forty years after; so that, according to this account, he lived full an hundred and twenty years; but the Jewish writers, for the sake of a round number, are frequently negligent whether they are exact or not in their chronological computations. Of Shammai they likewise tell us, that he was for some time the scholar of Hillel, and upon the removal of Manahem into Herod's service, was made vice-president of the Sanhedrim in his room; and that of all the Tannaim or Mishnical doctors, he came nearest to his master in eminence of learning, though in many points he differed in opinion from him. What we are chiefly to observe in relation to these two men at present, is,—That Herod should thus generously forgive them both, though Shammai, or Simeas, was the person who appeared so intrepid against him at his trial before the Sanhedrim, and Hillel, or Pollio, had all along warmly espoused the party of Hyrcanus. It must be presumed, however, that these two great men, whom he not only spared above all the rest, but took into his especial favour and confidence, had, during the siege, taken care to make their peace with him, by exhorting the besieged to a surrender: For while the contrary faction was encouraging the people with crying out, *The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord*, and making them expect some miraculous deliverance, these two wise politicians, foreseeing that the city could not hold out much longer against such a vigorous siege, and under the excessive want of all provisions, told them, in short, that all resistance was in vain, since God, for their sins, was now bringing them into subjection to this foreigner; and this piece of service (had Herod been of a more vindictive temper than he really was) could not well fail of reconciling them to his favour; *Prideaux's Connection*, anno 37.; and *Joseph. Antiq. lib. 15. c. 1.*

M. A.  
3978, &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
26, &c.  
from Jof.  
lib. 13.  
c. 19, to  
the end of  
lib. 15.

church) to interfere with the regal authority; and, accordingly, he sent for one Ananel from Babylon, (who was of the pontifical family indeed, but of no farther merit, than that he was an acquaintance of Herod's,) and put him into the office.

Mariamne, his best beloved wife, had then a brother, whose name was Aristobulus, to whom by right of birth the high-priesthood did belong; and, as she was continually solliciting him in behalf of her brother, so her mother Alexandra, who was the daughter of Hyrcanus, and a woman of an high spirit, wrote to Cleopatra queen of Egypt, (who had an absolute ascendant over Anthony,) to incline him to bestow the pontifical honour upon her son: so that for fear of offending Anthony, more than for gratifying of the ladies, he deposed Ananel †, and made Aristobulus (who was then but a youth of seventeen years old) high-priest in his stead.

When Phraortes came to be king of Parthia, and was informed of Hyrcanus's character and quality, he treated him with great courtesy: For he ordered him to be released from his chains, and allowed him to reside at Babylon, which was then part of the Parthian empire, and where a great number of Jews dwelt, who paid him both the reverence due to an high-priest, and the honour due to a king.

In this condition Hyrcanus might have lived, and ended his days very happily; but, being desirous of returning to his native country, he began to entertain great hopes of Herod's friendship, as having been once the preserver of his

† This is the third person that had been deposed from the pontifical dignity, since the time of the return from the Babylonish captivity; and Herod was so sensible of the illegality of it, that when Anthony sent to him to desire him to put Aristobulus into Ananel's place, at first he excused himself, by alledging, that such depositions were contrary to the Mosaic law, which enjoined, that the dignity should last as long as the life of the possessor, unless some defect happened to disqualify him. The first instance we meet with of this kind, is that of Jason's supplanting his brother Onias, and, by a larger sum of money, buying that office of Antiochus, in prejudice of the incumbent. The other was that of Hyrcanus, by his nephew Aristobulus, who wrestled that dignity from him by main force. But these depositions became afterwards so frequent, that there was hardly any other way of coming into that office, but by the expulsion of the incumbent; *Universal History, lib. 2, c. 11.*

his life, when he was arraigned before the Sanhedrim, and the founder indeed of all his fortunes. Herod, on the other hand, was as desirous to have Hyrcanus in his power, as the other was to come: and therefore, he not only invited him with great earnestness, and greater promises, but sent an embassy to Phraortes, to solicit his return. Thus having obtained the king's dismissal, the unfortunate old prince was carried back to Jerusalem, and, for some time, treated by Herod with all the outward tokens of kindness and respect.

His daughter Alexandra, having, by her interest with Cleopatra, obtained the high-priesthood for her son, thought that (as it was his right) she might by the same means procure him the crown, and therefore went on intriguing with Cleopatra, which when Herod came to understand, he confined her to the palace, and set spies upon her. This she resented with great indignation, as being made a prisoner, and therefore formed a design to make her escape, and to carry her son with her into Egypt to Cleopatra, who, upon this occasion, had invited them thither. But the design was discovered, and their journey stopped. Herod, however, for fear of Cleopatra, was forced to suspend his resentment, and making a virtue of necessity, pretended, with great clemency, to pardon in both what he could not well punish in either: But in a short time he had his revenge.

At the approach of the feast of tabernacles, Aristobulus was to officiate as high-priest. He was a very beautiful person, tall and well-shaped, and in the eighteenth year of his age. In the time of his officiating, he discharged himself with so becoming a reverence, and the splendor of the pontifical robes added such a lustre to the gracefulness of his person, that by both these he captivated the affections of the people, and every man's mouth was full of his praises; which raised the tyrant's jealousy to such a degree, that as soon as the festival was over, he had him drowned at Jericho †, though (to make his death pass for an unhap-

*He causes Aristobulus to be drowned, confines Alexandra, and puts his uncle Joseph to death.*

† Herod had invited him to an entertainment at Jericho, and when after dinner, several of his attendants bathed themselves in a fish pond, Aristobulus was prevailed upon to bear them company; but no sooner was he plunged into the water, but those that were in it before, (according as they were directed by Herod,) ducked and dipped him (by way of sport and play, as they pretended) so long under water, that at length he was actually drowned; *Jewish Antiq. lib. 15. c. 3.*



A. M.  
3978, &c  
Ant. Christ.  
26, &c.  
from Jos.  
lib. 13  
c. 19. to  
the end of  
lib. 15.

py accident, wherein he had no hand) he acted the part of chief mourner, and expended a large sum in a splendid funeral for him: But his hypocrisy was seen through, and detested by all.

Alexandra, in particular, was inconsolable for the loss of her son; nor could she have survived it, but for the hopes of having an opportunity of being revenged. To this purpose, having acquainted Cleopatra with the murder, she so represented Herod's villany, and her own distress, as moved the queen's compassion, and engaged her to do her utmost to revenge her cause: For she never left soliciting Anthony, till, at length, she prevailed with him to call Herod to an account for this wicked fact. But when Herod appeared before him, by fair words and large presents, he so effectually wrought upon Anthony, that instead of condemning, he seemed to vindicate him for what he had done: Whereupon, returning with much joy, and in triumph as it were over his accusers, he grew more tyrannical than ever, and in a short time shut up Alexandra in close confinement.

When he went to appear before Anthony, he left his uncle Joseph in the administration of the government, and gave him particular charge, that in case Anthony should put him to death, he should not suffer Mariamne, his best beloved wife, to survive the first news of it, that none, as he pretended †, might enjoy so rare a beauty but himself. In his absence, some words had passed between Mariamne and his sister Salome, wherein the queen reproached her with the meanness of her original, in comparison of the royal stock of the Asmonæans, from whom she descended. This the other was resolved to revenge; and therefore, as soon as Herod returned, she accused Mariamne of having too great a familiarity with Joseph, whom (though he was her own husband, as well as her uncle) she was content

† This he did, not so much that none else might have the enjoyment of the beautiful Mariamne, as that none might be left alive of the Asmonæan family to claim the crown, in opposition to that disposal which he had made of it to his brother Pheroras. Alexandra, the mother of Mariamne, he knew very well was a crafty and aspiring woman; and therefore, being apprehensive that the scheme which he had laid for the succession, could not take place, if either she, or her daughter were left alive after him, he ordered that both of them should be put to death in case he should miscarry in his application to Anthony; *Joseph. Antiq. lib. 15. c. 11.*

content to sacrifice, rather than not obtain her will upon the other. One thing that might contribute to the increase of Herod's jealousy, and the confirmation of what his sister had told him, was the fatal secret which Joseph had indiscreetly blabbed out, and Mariamne, in her passion, could not retain; for nothing less than an adulterous conversation, he thought, could have produced such a discovery: lib. 13. c. 19, to the end of lib. 15. And therefore, when she upbraided him with it, he was going to draw his dagger, and strike her to the heart; but though his love interposed to save her, he ordered his uncle immediately to be executed, without allowing him leave so much as to speak for himself; which when he came to know his innocence, and the queen's virtue, he could not but regret.

While these things were thus going on in Judea, there happened a grievous breach \* between Anthony and Octavianus, which terminated in a civil war, wherein Anthony at the battle of Actium, was quite ruined and undone. During the whole course of this war, Herod had always followed Anthony's party, and had therefore reason to fear, that the conqueror would deprive him of his kingdom for being so firm a friend to his enemy, and perhaps restore again Hyrcanus, who had once reigned under the protection of the Romans; and therefore, to prevent this, upon pretence of his holding correspondence with Malchus king of Arabia, in order to accomplish some treasonable designs

A. M. 3978, &c.  
Ant. Chis.  
26, &c.  
from Jos.  
lib. 13.  
c. 19, to  
the end of  
lib. 15.

He executes  
old Hyrcanus,  
secures  
his wife and  
her mother,  
and so goes  
to meet Augustus,

\* Anthony had provoked Octavianus against him, by the wrong done to Octavia his sister, whom Anthony had married, and yet divorced her for the gratification of his adulterous love to Cleopatra, though Octavia was much the handsomer of the two. Anthony had likewise given out, that Cleopatra had been married to Julius Cæsar, and that Cæsarion, whom she had by him was his lawful son, and consequently had the proper right to the inheritance, which Octavianus held only as his adopted son. These things were objected against Anthony; and Anthony, by his agents and letters, was not forgetful to recriminate. But these things were no more than pretences: The true reason of their disagreement was, that both these two great men, being not contented with half of the Roman empire, were each resolved to have all, and accordingly agreed to throw the dice of war for it; *Plutarch De Antonio*; and *Prideaux's Connection*, anno 33.

A. M.  
3978, &c.  
Ann. Chris.  
26, &c.  
from Jos.  
lib. 13.  
c. 19. to  
the end of  
lib. 15.

designs against him, he \* caused him to be put to death, after he had passed the eightieth year of his age. His wife Mariamne, and her mother, he secured in the castle of Alexandrion, with a strong guard, under the command of Sohemus, and with the same order that he had left with his uncle Joseph before; and having committed the government of the kingdom to the care of Pheroras, another of his brothers, he set forward on his journey to meet Octavianus.

who con-  
firms him  
in the king-  
dom of Ju-  
dea, but  
upon his  
return, he  
meets with  
family un-  
easinesses.

Octavianus was then at Rhodes, where Herod, having obtained audience, as he entered into his presence, laid aside his diadem, and in his address to him, freely owned all that he had done for Anthony, and what he was farther ready to have done, had he required it of him. 'This (he said) he thought himself obliged to, by the friendship that was between them; and would he be pleased to think the like friendship worthy of his acceptance, (since Anthony was now quite lost,) he would not fail to serve him with the same zeal and fidelity.' This Herod delivered with such an intrepidity, that Octavianus, pleased with the spirit of the man, caused him to put on his diadem again, accepted of his friendship, and confirmed him in the kingdom of Judea.

Pleased with this good success, Herod went back to Judea with great joy; but on his arrival, found all his felicity soured with the troubles of his own family. Mariamne, his most beloved wife, in whose conversation he took the greatest delight, having bribed the secret out of Sohemus, conceived thereupon such a strong hatred and aversion to him, that she received his embraces with scorn, and concealing the true cause of her resentment, was perpetually upbraiding him with the murder of her nearest relations; so that, by this provoking treatment, his patience was almost quite worn out. Hearing however of the death of Anthony and Cleopatra, and how Octavianus had thereupon made himself master of all Egypt, he thought himself obliged to wait on him there likewise.

He

\* The character which Josephus gives of this prince is to this effect.—He was a man of eminent candour, justice, and moderation; but a lover of his ease, and so conscious to himself of his own insufficiency for the offices of public administration, that, for the most part, he intrusted that charge in other hands. This facility of his was the making of Antipater and Herod's fortune, though (without any colour of law or equity) it cost him his life; *Jewish Antiq. lib. 15 c. 9.*



He was received with great kindness, and having, in his return, accompanied him to Antioch, he so far ingratiated himself with him on the way, that he granted him several places in augmentation of his dominions, and, for ever after, of all the tributary princes in the Roman empire, gave him the first place in his favour. But how prosperous so ever he was in his affairs abroad, when he returned, he found nothing but trouble and vexation at home. Mariamne still retained her resentment, for the cruel commission given to Sohemus; so that, when he offered her his caresses, she not only rejected them (as usual) with the utmost aversion, but added, over and above, such bitter reproaches for the death of her relations, as provoked and enraged him to so high a degree, that he could hardly forbear laying violent hands upon her. This fit of rage her implacable enemy Salome took the advantage of, and sent in his butler (whom she had before suborned for that purpose) to accuse the queen of having tempted him to give the king poison; whereupon he ordered her favourite eunuch, without whose privity he knew she did nothing, to be put upon the rack; but all that he confessed was, that something which Sohemus had told Mariamne, was the cause of her being out of humour.

A. M.  
3978, &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
16, &c.  
from Jos.  
lib 13 c.  
19 to the  
end of lib.  
15.  
Goes to  
Augustus  
again, and  
when he re-  
turns, puts  
his wife  
Mariamne  
and her  
mother to  
death;

Upon the hearing of this, Herod fell into a rage of jealousy; and, supposing that nothing but a criminal intimacy could have induced Sohemus to betray this secret to her, he ordered him immediately to be put to death; and then, calling together a council of his friends, and accusing her of an intention to take away his life, he had her condemned, but not with a design to have her put to death; but the malice of his mother and sister was so bitter against her, they would not let him be quiet. They knew very well his temper; and, being apprehensive, that as long as she was alive, he might easily relapse into his former fondness, they urged the necessity of her speedy execution, and had that influence over him, that he commanded her immediately to be put to death. But he soon repented him of his rashness. For, after that his rage was quenched by her blood, his love revived, and the consideration of what he had done filled his mind with the agonies of remorse, and the regret of her loss affected him so, that he fell dangerously ill; but, upon recovery, he nevertheless gave orders for the execution of Alexandra, for having too easily credited the news that was spread abroad of his death.

He

A. M.  
3978, &c.  
Ant. Chris.  
25, &c.  
from Jos.  
lib. 13. c.  
19, to the  
end of lib.  
15.

and three  
of his own  
sons.

He had two sons by Mariamne, Alexander and Aristobulus, whom he had sent to Rome for the benefit of education; but, upon their return home, by the same instruments that had procured their mother's death, they fell under their father's displeasure. For having in the heat of their youth let fall many rash words, which expressed their resentment of their mother's hard usage, with threats of revenge upon those that had been the chief authors of it; all this was carried to their father, with such malicious glosses and comments upon it, as made him believe that they were hatching ill designs against his person. He was naturally of a jealous temper, and this was so improved by the artifices of Pheroras and Salome, his brother and sister, that, in a council which consisted of none but his own creatures, he procured their condemnation \*, and so ordered them to be strangled: And it was upon the account of

\* Josephus has represented this whole proceeding in this light. When Herod had complained to Augustus of the undutiful behaviour of his sons, how they had plotted against his life, and designed to have made their escape out of his dominions, Augustus advised him to call together a council at Berytus in Phœnicia, and so to inquire into the nature of their offences. This Herod accordingly did; but when he came into the assembly, (which consisted of an hundred and fifty persons,) such as Augustus had directed him to, (except Archilaus, king of Cappadocia, who, being father-in-law to Alexander, was thought by Herod too much engaged by that relation, to be an impartial judge in this matter,) he began to accuse his sons with great vehemence and passion, and, after having spoken in terms very unbecoming a father, he said, 'That not only Augustus made him master of his sons destiny, but that the very laws of the Jews declared, That if a son was accused by his parents, and they put their hands upon his head, all who were present should stone him, and put him to death; and therefore, though he might treat his sons in this manner, after the crimes whereof they stood convicted, yet he chose rather to have their opinions upon the matter, not doubting but that they would join with him in giving an example to future ages, of that just severity which ought to be exercised upon unnatural children.' Saturinus, a man of consular dignity, who was at the head of the council, was for punishing Alexander and Aristobulus, but not with death; and three sons, who were present with him, concurred in the same opinion; but Voluminius pronounced that they were worthy of death, which the majority of the assembly too readily coming into, carried the question. On this occasion every one pitied the two princes, but

of their fate, and the execution of Antipater \*, another of his sons after this, (who was, in reality, for procuring his father's

A. M.  
3278, &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
16, &c.

from Jos.  
lib. 13.

c. 19. to  
the end of  
lib. 15.

no one durst speak plainly, for fear of incurring the king's displeasure: But at last, an old soldier of the king's, who had a son about Alexander's age, and his particular friend, took the liberty to make some sharp remonstrances to the king, telling him withal, that not only the officers and soldiers, but the whole body of the people, was moved with compassion for the young princes, and pitied their sad fate. Whereupon the king, losing all patience, commanded the soldier and his son to be seized, and all besides whom he had named. When the old man was put upon the rack, he confessed that he had taken up a resolution to kill the king, and to expose himself, for the love of Alexander, to all sorts of punishment. This confession both enraged and intimidated Herod, so that he sent his sons immediately to Sebaste, (formerly called *Samaria*,) and there ordered them to be strangled. And thus ended the life of these two unfortunate brothers, who, by too much expressing their resentment for their mother's death, provoked those who had been the chief authors of it, by the like artifices, to procure theirs; *vid.* Josephus's reflection hereupon. *Joseph. Antiq. lib. 16. c. 17.*

\* This Antipater was Herod's eldest son by Doris, a woman of no quality, whilst himself was a private man; for which reason he kept him and his mother, for some time, at a distance from court: But when he began to take offence at Alexander and Aristobulus, his two sons by Mariamne, he thereupon treated him with a great deal of distinction, and, in a full assembly of the people, declared him his immediate heir to the crown. After the death of Mariamne's sons, he had nothing that stood in his way, but only the life of his father Herod: and, to get rid of him, he formed a conspiracy with his uncle Pheroras, (who, at this time, was in some disgrace with his brother the king,) to have him poisoned: But, that there might be no suspicion of his being concerned in the thing, he procured some of his friends to send for him to Rome, (where he had been before under Agrippa's protection) on pretence of waiting upon Augustus. Herod, however, having found out the whole plot, wrote to his son, without giving him the least hint of it, to hasten his journey home, lest something should happen in his absence to his great disadvantage; whereupon he returned into Palestine, without the least suspicion of what had passed. When he came to Jerusalem, his friends, who attended him, were not permitted to enter the palace; and when he went to embrace the king, the king thrust him from him, upbraiding him with the murder of his brothers Alexander and Aristobulus, and with the parricide which he intended to have committed on his person, and whereof he accused him the next day,



A. M. 4001, &c.  
Ant. christ.  
1, &c.  
ant. Abr.  
Jul. 3  
from Jos.  
lib. 13.  
c. 19. to  
the end of  
lib. 15.

father's death,) that Octavianus (then called Augustus) was used to say, that it was better to be Herod's hog than his son.

But whatever opinion Augustus might have of Herod, it is certain that Herod had no small veneration for him, or at least, carried his compliments very far. For he not only built two stately cities, and called them both by his name \*, but, in the very city of Jerusalem built a theatre and an amphitheatre, and, in honour of Augustus, celebrated games, and exhibited shows, which gave great disgust to the Jews, as things inconsistent with the legal constitutions and religion of their country. Nay, to such a degree of complaisance proceeded he, as not only to set up the Roman ensign † which was the figure of an eagle) over

before Quintilius Varus, the governor of Syria. The proof was so plain against him, that Antipater, having nothing to say in his justification, was loaded with irons and put in prison. But while he was there, a false report being spread, that Herod was dead, he begged of his keeper to set him at liberty, and made him large promises if he would do it, which being brought to his father's ear, as weak as he was, (for he died in a few days after.) he raised himself upon his elbow, and calling one of his guards, sent him that moment to dispatch his son; *Joseph. Antiq. lib. 17. c. 7. and 9.; et De bello lib. 1. c. 21.*

\* The one was Sebaste, which signifies the same in Greek as Augustus does in Latin. It was situated on the same place where stood Samaria, which Hyrcanus had destroyed, and was in part rebuilt by Gabinius, when he was governor of Syria, and called after his name: But as he was soon turned out of his government, it advanced no farther than a good large village, until Herod (who from his stately structures was afterwards called *the Great*) undertook to finish it, and, in so doing, spared no cost to make it one of the richest and most beautiful cities in his kingdom.—The other was Cæsarea, so called in honour of the emperor, though its former appellation was *the tower of Straton*. It stood by the sea-side, on the coasts of Phœnicia, upon the pass into Egypt, and was very convenient for trade, but that it had a bad harbour. To remedy this, therefore, he ordered a mole to be made in the form of an half-moon, and large enough for a royal navy to ride in. The buildings of the town were all of marble, private houses as well as palaces; but the master-piece of all was the port, whereof we meet with a description in *Josephus' Antiq. lib. 15. c. 13.*

† This gave great offence to the Jews, because the Romans were known to pay divine honours to their ensigns, which they used to set up in some eminent place in their camp; according

to

over one of the gates of the temple, but even to raise a sumptuous temple, all of white marble, in memory of the favours which Augustus had conferred on him; though, by this act of idolatrous flattery, he alienated the hearts of the Jews, and raised some conspirators \* against his life.

To recover therefore their good opinion, and to make some amends for these breaches upon their law, in the nineteenth year of his reign, he formed a design of rebuilding the temple †, which, by length of time, (having

to that known passage of Tertullian; 'Religio Romanorum tota castrensis, signa veneratur, signa jurat, signa omnibus Diis præponit.'

\* There is a remarkable one of this kind, which is related by Josephus, to this effect.—Ten citizens, taking offence at Herod's bringing in the rites of heathenish superstition, entered into a conspiracy to cut him off by an assassination. One of these conspirators was blind, and though in no condition to act any thing for the public good, offered to bear his part in suffering for it, and by this generous offer settled them all in their determinations. They therefore provided themselves with daggers under their garments, and went to the theatre, where Herod was to come, with a full intent to slay him there. But, as he was entering the theatre, one of his spies (for he had great plenty of them) having got some notice of the matter, made a discovery of it to him; so that, returning to his palace, he sent for the conspirators, who were so far from denying their design, that they produced the very daggers that were to have done the execution, alledging for themselves, 'that they were not engaged in any criminal combination, to gratify their passions or interests, but in a secret league, for the common good, and the defence of their laws, which all true patriots and professors were bound to maintain with their lives.' After this declaration they were hurried away to death, and made to undergo the most exquisite torments. But the infamous informer did not long survive them; for, having incurred the general odium of the people, he was met by some in a private place, and torn to pieces; *Jewish Antiq. lib. 15. c. 11.*

† Whatever some Jewish Rabbins may tell us, it is certain that the temple of Herod was widely different from that of Solomon, and from that which was built by Zerubbabel after the captivity; for the description of it, according to Josephus, who himself had seen it, is much to this purpose.—The front of this magnificent building, which resembled that of a royal palace, was adorned with many rich spoils, which the kings of the Jews had dedicated to God as the monuments of their victories. The middle of it, which was much higher than the two extremes, afforded a very agreeable prospect to the extent of several furlongs.

A. M.  
4 cor, &c.  
Ant. Chris.  
1, &c.  
aut. Ær  
Vulg. 3.  
from Jos.  
lib. 13. c.  
19. to the  
end of lib.  
15.

ing now stood five hundred years) as well as the violence of enemies, was in a very decayed and ruinous condition. In two years time he got together all proper materials,

to those that either lived in the country, or were travelling to the city. The gate of it was a very curious piece of workmanship. From the top of it hung a variety of rich tapestry, of several colours, embellished with purple flowers. On each side of it stood a stately pillar, with a golden vine creeping and twining about it, whose branches were laden with a cluster of grapes, that hung dangling down from the cornices. Round about the temple were large galleries, answerable to the rest of the work in magnificence, and in beauty much exceeding all that had been before. The temple was surrounded by three courts or inclosures. The first inclosure, which was a square of a furlong on every side, had a gate on the east, another on the south, and another on the north side; but it had four towards the west; one leading to the palace, another into the city, and two more into the fields. It was secured without by a strong wall, and within was adorned with stately porticoes or galleries, sustained by no less than 162 columns of Corinthian work, and all so very thick, that hardly three men could grasp one with their arms. They supported a roof of cedar very curiously wrought, and made three galleries; the two outermost of which were of the same dimensions, *i. e.* thirty foot in breadth, fifty in height, and a furlong in length; but that in the middle was half as broad again as the other, and twice as high. The court or area before these galleries was paved with marble of several colours, and, at a little distance, was a second inclosure, formed by an handsome ballustrade of stone, and pillars at equal distances, whereon were inscriptions in Greek and Latin, giving warning to all strangers not to proceed any farther upon pain of death. To this inclosure there was but one entrance towards the east, but towards the north and south, at equal distances, three. In the middle of these two inclosures, there was a third, which included the temple, strictly so called, and the altar of burnt sacrifices, which was fifty cubits high, and forty cubits wide every way, all built of rough stone, on which no tool had ever been used. Into this court (which none but priests were permitted to enter) there were nine gates; one towards the east, four towards the south, and as many towards the north; but towards the west there was no gate, only one great wall ran all along from north to south. At the entrance of each gate within were large rooms in form of pavilions, of thirty cubits square, and forty high, supported by a pillar of eighteen foot in circumference; and the whole was adorned with porticoes, sustained by two rows of pillars, to the east, north, and south, but towards the west there was nothing but the wall just now mentioned. This is  
the



materials, and, in nine \* and an half more had it so far finished, as to make it fit for divine service; though, to carry on the outbuildings, workmen were continued about it, to the time of our Saviour's ministry, and longer.

A. M.  
4001, &c.  
Ant. Chriſt.  
1, &c.  
aut. Ar.  
Vulg 3.  
from Joſ.  
lib. 13.  
c. 19. 10  
the end of  
lb 15.

While these things were doing in Judea, the temple of Janus was shut at Rome. In times of war the custom was to have its gates laid open, but shut in the time of peace; and it was now the fifth time, since the building of that city, that the gates of this temple had been shut. The first time was, in the reign of Numa; the second, after the end of the first Punic war; the third, after Augustus's victory over Anthony and Cleopatra; the fourth, upon his return from the Cantabrian war in Spain; and the fifth now, in the twenty-sixth year of his reign, and in the thirty-third of Herod's, when a general peace (which lasted for twelve years together) prevailed over the world, and was a proper prelude for ushering in the advent † of the Prince of peace, even Christ our Lord, who (according to the exactest computation)

the description of the temple, as it was repaired by Herod, that may be extracted from Joseph. Antiq. lib. 15 c. 13; but whoever is desirous to know these things more minutely, must consult those authors that have wrote upon them *ex professo*: Among which Mess. de Beausobre and Lenfant, in their general preface to the New Testament, have given us no bad sketch; and Jurieu, in his *Ilift des Dogmes, &c.* has rectified some mistakes in the account of Josephus; *part 2. c. 4.*

\* And yet the Jews could tell our Saviour, that *forty and six years had the temple been building*, John ii. 20; but this is easily reconciled. For though at the time, when the Jews spake to our Saviour, six and forty years had passed, from the time that this building was begun, yet in nine years and an half it was made fit for divine service. The out-buildings however were far from being finished; and therefore a great number of labourers and artificers were continued at work, all the time that our Saviour was upon the earth, and for some years after: till upon the coming of Gessius Florus, to be governor of Judea, eighteen thousand of them were discharged at one time, and these for want of other employ, began those mutinies and seditions, which at last drew on the destruction of Jerusalem, and the temple with it; *Joseph. Antiq. lib. 20. c. 8.*

† According to the vulgar æra, Christ was born in the four thousand and fourth year of the world's creation; but this way of computation (though it be commonly used, especially in this western part of the world) is a manifest mistake, which Dionysius Exiguus, a Scythian by birth, and afterwards

A. M.  
4001, &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
1, &c.  
ant. JEr.  
Vul'g. 3.  
from Jos.  
lib. 13. c.  
19. to the  
end of lb.  
15.

putation) was born in the four thousandth year \* of the world's creation.

### THE OBJECTION.

JOsephus indeed may be a good historian, and his account of the Jewish affairs of some help to fill up the chasm, from that period, where not only the sacred penman, but the authors of the acts of the Maccabees, are likewise known to leave us; but to his credit it would tend not a little, if we could find any profane writer of good authority making mention of the two great things that stagger our faith, viz. Alexander's adventure with the high-priest at Jerusalem, and the wonderful production of the Septuagint version.

For

a Roman abbot, was the first author of. In the first ages of Christianity, Christians had no particular Epocha to themselves: They generally used that of the building of the city, or the years of the Cæsars in common with the Romans. The first, that they made use of, was the æra of Dioclesian; for his terrible persecution had made such an impression on their minds, that the time when it happened was long had in remembrance. It was in the year 527 of the vulgar Christian æra, and not sooner, that the world began to compute time from our Saviour's birth; and therefore the wonder is less, that, after so great a distance of time, this Roman Abbot should make a mistake in fixing the first year of it: But the misfortune was, that, before the mistake was discovered, our countryman Bede's taking it without examination from him, and using it in all his writings, gave it a sanction; nor has the learned world as yet thought fit to correct it, out of a persuasion, I presume, that there may be some danger in altering things that are settled. It is thought sufficient for the purposes of chronology, that there is a certain Christian æra fix'd, which every one knows, and reckons by, though there may be some mistake, as to the particular time, when it should have commenced. In short, this error has been too long followed to be corrected, which must of course alter all dates, and give the world too much trouble; and therefore it is but calling it a vulgar Christian æra, and remembering that Christ was born four years before it began; it is but remembering, I say, that the year which we now write 1743, ought to be 1747, and all is well; *Prideaux's Preface to the first part of his Connection; and Hearne's System of universal history, lib. 1. c. 3.*

\* This, we may observe, falls in exactly with the time where an old tradition of the Jews places the beginning of the days

‘ For is it not very strange, that none of the Heathen A. M. 4001, &c. Ant. Chril. 1, &c. Vulg. 3- from Jos. lib. 13. c. 19. to the end of lib. 15.  
 ‘ historians, either Greek or Latin, who trace this great  
 ‘ conqueror, as it were, through every step he takes,  
 ‘ should ever give us the least hint of his having been at  
 ‘ Jerusalem? If he was incensed against the Jews, while  
 ‘ he was at the siege of Tyre <sup>c</sup> for refusing to furnish him  
 ‘ with provisions and forces, how can we think, that a mock  
 ‘ procession of a parcel of priests in *pontificalibus*, could ever  
 ‘ be of efficacy enough to divert the rage of a prince of his  
 ‘ impetuous temper?

‘ But supposing a divine interposition in this case; yet  
 ‘ how comes this Alexander, who was of a different re-  
 ‘ ligion, to conform so far to the Jewish way of worship,  
 ‘ as to offer sacrifices to the God of Israel? Phœnicians  
 ‘ indeed he might have in his army, <sup>d</sup> but where he  
 ‘ could pick up any Chaldean troops, (as Josephus <sup>e</sup>  
 ‘ tells us he had several with him,) when he had not yet  
 ‘ been at Babylon, is somewhat unaccountable; but tho’  
 ‘ he might be very liberal in his favours to the people of  
 ‘ Jerusalem, and grant them several immunities, yet it is  
 ‘ not a little incongruous, <sup>f</sup> that the high-priest should  
 ‘ petition him for the like privileges to be extended to the  
 ‘ captive Jews in Babylonia and Media, when (as yet) he  
 ‘ had not made the least conquest in either of these coun-  
 ‘ tries.

‘ Upon

days of the Messiah. According to that tradition, the world  
 was to last six thousand years; two thousand before the law,  
 two thousand under the law, and two thousand under the Mes-  
 siah. This tradition is of great antiquity, and esteemed as au-  
 thentic as any of this sort; and though its pretending to fore-  
 tel when the world shall end, (which the Scriptures make a  
 secret that God has reserved for himself,) sufficiently shews its  
 vanity: yet since the Jews have thought fit to place it among  
 the most authentic of their traditions, it serves against them,  
 1st, To prove the time when, according to their own doctrine,  
 the Messiah was to come; and, 2dly, To convict them of their  
 gross and most perverse infidelity, in that, though Christ was  
 born in the four thousandth year of the creation, from which  
 (according to this their tradition) his appearance was to com-  
 mence, they have now suffered above seventeen hundred and  
 twenty years to pass, and have not yet acknowledged him;  
*Prideaux’s Connection, anno 4.*

<sup>c</sup> Joseph. Antiq. lib. 11. c. 8. <sup>d</sup> Moyle’s Works, vol. 2.  
<sup>e</sup> Joseph. Ibid. <sup>f</sup> Prideaux’s Connection, anno 277.



A. M.  
4001, &c.  
Ant. Chris  
t, &c.  
act Jer.  
Vulg. 3.  
from Jos.  
lib. 13.  
c. 19. to  
the end of  
lib. 15.

‘ Upon the whole, therefore, we may conclude, that,  
‘ as the Jews <sup>g</sup> at this time were very much addicted to  
‘ religious romances, Josephus might give his invention  
‘ some scope in this matter, as thinking it a diminution to  
‘ the honour of his nation, to have so great a man, as  
‘ this sovereign conqueror of the world, come into the  
‘ neighbouring nations, without paying a visit to Jerusa-  
‘ lem; and when he was once there, it was necessary that  
‘ something extraordinary should happen at his reception.

‘ The like piece of fiction we may reasonably presume is  
‘ the account which this historian gives us of the Septu-  
‘ agint version at Alexandria. For besides the difficulty  
‘ of conceiving how these seventy-two elders, who were  
‘ sent from Judea <sup>h</sup>, (where neither Greek nor Hebrew  
‘ were, at this time, in common use,) should so far be-  
‘ come masters of both languages, as to be able, in the  
‘ space of seventy-two days, to finish a translation of the  
‘ Scriptures: It appears from other histories, that Deme-  
‘ trius Phalerius (who is made the chief agent in this whole  
‘ affair) was, at this time, in no manner of confidence with  
‘ Ptolemy Philadelphus; and though it may not be thought  
‘ beneath his dignity to be the king’s librarian, yet he was  
‘ now in prison, if not in his grave, for being an enemy  
‘ to the king’s succession.

‘ It seems improbable however, that if he was alive and  
‘ in favour, he should address the king, concerning this  
‘ interpretation, by way of epistle, (as we find he does  
‘ in <sup>i</sup> Josephus,) when he was every day at court, and  
‘ had an easy access to him; that the king should trouble  
‘ himself about asking the interpreters such questions  
‘ as are related in the history of Aristeas, to which  
‘ the same Josephus <sup>k</sup> refers us; and, above all, that  
‘ he should advance such an incredible sum of mo-  
‘ ney <sup>†</sup>, as, one way or other, amounts to two millions  
‘ Sterling,

<sup>g</sup> Moyle’s Works, vol. 2.      <sup>h</sup> Prideaux’s Connection, anno  
277.      <sup>i</sup> Jewish Antiq. lib. 12. c. 2.      <sup>k</sup> Ibid. lib. 12.  
c. 1.

<sup>†</sup> According to Aristeas, Ptolemy expended, in redeeming the  
captive Jews, that were in his kingdom, 650 talents; in ves-  
sels of silver sent to the temple, 70 talents; in vessels of gold  
for the same use, 50 talents; in precious stones to adorn these  
vessels, 250 talents; in gifts for sacrifices, 100 talents; to the  
interpreters,

‘ Sterling, (more than his whole library was worth,) and  
 ‘ all for the version of one single book, which neither  
 ‘ he, nor any of his court (as long as they continued Hea-  
 ‘ thens) could have any other value for, than as it was a  
 ‘ true and genuine history. But all this Josephus might  
 ‘ say, out of a pious design perhaps, to gain among the  
 ‘ vulgar the greater veneration and authority to a transla-  
 ‘ tion of the Scriptures, which was then more in use than  
 ‘ the original itself.’

A. M.  
 4001, &c.  
 Ant. Christ.  
 1, &c.  
 aut. Ær.  
 Vulg. 3-  
 from Jos.  
 lib. 13.  
 c. 19. to  
 the end of  
 lib. 15

It cannot be expected indeed, that any human composi-  
 tion should be without faults, and least of all can history  
 promise itself that exemption, when it has so many distant  
 and abstruse matters to inquire into, and is forced in many  
 cases to take up with the testimony, and sometimes the  
 conjectures, of others. It may be said, however, in fa-  
 vour of Josephus, that the records, from whence he com-  
 piled his history of the Jews, were either those of their  
 own sacred Hebrew books; those of the prophets during  
 the continuance of their succession; or those of the most  
 authentic writers that flourished in their nation all along  
 afterward. For, in the main, he was not so much an ori-  
 ginal historian himself, as an abridger of such ancient hi-  
 stories as he found in the highest esteem and veneration;  
 and how fair and impartial he has been (about these times  
 more particularly) in making this compilation, any one  
 may perceive, that will but give himself the trouble of  
 comparing his abridgement of the first book of the Macca-  
 bees with the book itself. So justly might Suidas give<sup>1</sup>  
 Josephus the title of a *lover of truth*; and so truly might  
 Josephus say of himself, at the conclusion of his Antiqui-  
 ties, as well as of his Jewish wars, ‘ As for the style and  
 ‘ manner of my writing them, that I submit to the judg-  
 ‘ ment of my readers; but as for the candour and sincer-  
 ‘ ity of my accounts, I do here declare to the world,

Answered,  
 by shewing  
 the truth of  
 Josephus's  
 history.

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Z

‘ that

interpreters, at their first coming, three talents a-piece, in sil-  
 ver, 12,216 talents in the whole; and, lastly, to each of them,  
 at their parting, two talents of gold, and a golden cup of a  
 talent weight, which, in the sum-total making 1046 talents  
 of silver, and 516 talents of gold, will, when reduced to our  
 Sterling money, amount to one million nine hundred and eigh-  
 teen thousand five hundred and thirty-seven pounds ten shil-  
 lings; besides the charges he was at in fetching these inter-  
 preters to Alexandria, maintaining them there, and sending  
 them back again to Jerusalem; *Prideaux's Connection, anno 277.*

<sup>1</sup> Page 1261.

A. M. 4001, &c.  
Ant. Chris.  
1, &c.  
ant. Æ.  
Vulg. 3.  
from Jos.  
lib. 13.  
c. 19. to  
the end of  
lib. 15.

That Alex  
ander was  
at Jerusa-  
lem.

That the  
Chaldeans  
are wrong  
named.

A provi-  
dential in-  
terposition  
in this af-  
fair.

‘ that I have kept strictly to the truth, and have had no-  
‘ thing else in view, through the course of my whole work.’  
‘ That Alexander the Great, after his having taken  
the city of Tyre, invaded the northern parts of Judea, and  
went as far as the balsam-trees, near Jericho, not only  
Eusebius in his Chronicon, but Pliny \*, in his Natural hi-  
story likewise, directly informs us; and that he not only  
subdued that part of Syria which is called *Palestine*, but  
went also about at this time to those cities that refused to  
submit to him, we have the concurring testimony both of  
Curtius <sup>n</sup> and Arrian <sup>o</sup>; and, if their testimony be true,  
it is very presumable that he did not forget to visit Jeru-  
salem in his indignation for its having refused to send him  
supplies.

The Samaritans indeed acted another part: They obeyed Alexander’s summons, and went in a body of eight thousand men, to his assistance at Tyre. As soon as he had carried the place, they marched with his army to Jerusalem, and these are the men whom Josephus joins with the Phœnicians, though, by an error of the press, or transcription at first, they are called *Χαλδαῖες* instead of *Χυαῖες*, (according to Bishop Loyd’s emendation,) *Chaldeans*, instead of *Cutheans* or *Samaritans*, the old inveterate enemies of the Jews, and who therefore were glad of this opportunity of destroying them, and promised themselves, (as Josephus <sup>p</sup> expresses it) “ all the licence of blood and  
“ pillage upon the high-priest himself, as well as upon the  
“ citizens, that rage or revenge could draw from a victo-  
“ rious prince, under the sense and provocation of the af-  
“ front he had received.”

Alexander accordingly comes, breathing out wrath against the Jews, and, with his victorious army, is ready to revenge the insolent message of their being unwilling to fight for any but his enemy Darius: But, instead of that,  
in

<sup>m</sup> Mr Whiston’s Alexander at Jerusalem.

\* Therein he tells us, that as this tree was peculiar to Judea, (he might have said, to that part near Jericho,) Alexander, when he waged war there, caused an experiment to be made of the quantity of balsam that distilled from one of these trees, and upon trial it was found, that, on a summer’s day, so much would drop from one as filled a concha; *Natural history*, lib. 12. c. 25.

<sup>n</sup> Lib. 4. c. 17.  
lib. 11. c. 8.

<sup>o</sup> Lib. 50.

<sup>p</sup> Jewish Antiq.



in a day or two he goes away with the greatest love and kindness for them; permits them to live by their ancient laws; forgives them the tribute of the sabbatical year; readily invites them to fight for him as his allies, and, the very next year, in his own new built city of Alexandria, gives them all equal privileges with the Macedonians themselves. Now this sudden alteration of his cannot well be imputed to any thing else but a divine interposition; and therefore, since Plutarch<sup>a</sup> informs us, that it was no unusual thing for this great man to be influenced in his conduct by dreams and visions on other occasions, it is highly probable, that this remarkable change in him did likewise depend upon the remembrance of the vision which he had at Dio in Macedonia, as himself relates in the history.

A. M.  
4001, &c.  
Ant. Chrif.  
1, &c.  
aut Ær.  
Vulg. 3.  
from Jof.  
lib 13.  
c. 19. 10  
the end of  
lib 15.

<sup>r</sup> The like is to be said of the change that was made at this juncture in the conduct of the high-priest, and all the people. For, since before this they durst not fight against Darius, for their oath's sake, and yet could now, without any scruple, go into that very army which had twice conquered his forces, and was then going to take away all his dominions, they must have had such a divine warrant for doing this, as the vision and admonition, which, the night before, was given to the high-priest, may be interpreted to imply. This, indeed, we own, is all providential and miraculous: but, if we look into their histories, (whether canonical or apocryphal,) we shall find, that from the days of Abraham to the days of Josephus himself, things of this nature were very common among the Jews.

The short of the matter is this,——The Jews, at this time, had certainly a great and eminent deliverance; but then the question is, Whence did this deliverance come?

<sup>s</sup> If we judge by the entire history of the Jewish nation, we shall expect it to have been after some extraordinary and providential manner. The Jewish records tell us, that it was really so, and give us the particular account of it. The Heathen records say nothing at all, either against it, or about it; and therefore we must be left at liberty to think, that the authority of the Jewish historian, who relates it, (if nothing absurd or incongruous appears in his relation,) does certainly preponderate such a negative argument,

Z 2

gument,

<sup>a</sup> In Alexandro.  
<sup>s</sup> Ibid.

Mr Whiston's Alexander at Jeru-

A. M.  
4001, &c.  
Ant. Chris.  
1, &c.  
ant. Ær  
Vulg 3.  
from Jos.  
lib 13.  
c. 19. to  
the end of  
lib. 15.

And that  
Alexander  
might very  
well do  
what he did  
at Jerusa-  
lem.

That the  
LXX in-  
terpreters  
might be  
skilled in  
the Greek  
tongue.

gument, as the bare omission of one transaction by some later Heathen historians can amount to.

Upon the supposition then, that Alexander, by this supernatural direction, entered Jerusalem in a peaceable manner, his offering sacrifice to the God of Israel, whom (according to the principles of his own religion) he might take for the national god of the Jews, was exactly agreeable (as appears by the several accounts of his life) to his usual method upon the like occasions; and his promising to grant the same immunities he had given to them in Judea to the Jews in Media and Babylonia, (though he had not as yet conquered these countries,) was the natural result of his having seen the prophecy of Daniel, which, both he and the high-priest fully persuaded themselves, that he was the person appointed by Providence to fulfil.

Now, whoever considers the natural effects of conquests, what changes and revolutions they make, not only in the constitution, but in the language likewise, of any kingdom, and how fatally prone the very conquered are to learn the speech, as well as imitate the manners, of those that have brought them under subjection, will have no occasion to wonder, that, after the reduction of Judea by a Grecian prince, and a prince who had distinguished that nation above all others with his royal favours, the Grecian language should soon grow into request, especially among the people of the better fashion, and such as made learning their profession.

The Macedonians had not long made themselves masters of Babylon, before Berosus (who is said by Tatian to have lived in the time of Alexander) became such a proficient in the Greek tongue, that in it he wrote the history of the affairs of the Chaldeans, and the actions of their kings, whereof we have some fragments in the writings of Josephus and Eusebius; and, <sup>u</sup> not long after him, Manetho, a priest of Heliopolis in Egypt, in the same language wrote his commentaries of the Egyptian affairs, which he dedicated to this very Ptolemy Philadelphus for whose use the Septuagint translation was made. The Greek language, in short, spread itself abroad where-ever Alexander's arms prevailed, and soon became the universal language of the polite and learned; and

<sup>t</sup> Prideaux's Connection, anno 260.

<sup>u</sup> Ibid. anno 250.

and therefore we can hardly suppose, but that, in a populous nation, there should be found a competent number of persons, duly qualified to translate a short book (for the Pantateuch \* was all that they translated, and this (every one knows) is far from being a long one) into a language that was then in the highest vogue, from another, in which some of their doctors are said to have been so critically, so minutely skilled, as to be able to tell how often each letter occurred in the whole.

Demetrius Phalereus was not only a learned philosopher, but a person likewise of great wisdom, justice, and probity, as appeared by his government of Athens †, under Cassander, one of Alexander's captains: But, being expelled from thence by the prevailing power of Demetrius, the son of Antigonus, and, after the death of Cassander, forced to withdraw into Egypt, he was there received with great favour and honour by Ptolemy Soter, and became one of his chief counsellors. He dissuaded the king from making any of his sons co-partner with him in the kingdom, and ‡ told him the inconvenience of it; but, we do not perceive from Laertius, or any other historian, that he any ways opposed the succession of Philadelphus. The king indeed did not follow his advice in this particular; but still we find him in great favour and request at court, both with the father and son: And therefore, if after the son's accession, he fell into some disgrace, (whatever the occasion of it might be,) it is but supposing, either that this misfortune befel him some years after the king's accession, or that he, after a short disgrace, was restored to favour again, and then we may allow him space enough (and without any disparagement to his character) to have, at one and the same time, both the direction of the Septuagint version, and the superintendency of the royal library.

For,

\* Aristeas, Aristobulus, and Philo say, that the law only was translated by the LXX; and Josephus, in the preface to his *Antiquities*, expressly tell us, that they did not translate for Ptolemy the whole Scriptures, but the law only.

† In the acknowledgment of his just government, the Athenians erected for him as many statues in their city as there were days in a year, which was the greatest honour that ever was done to any citizen in that place; *Diog. Laertius in vita Demetrii Phalerei*; and *Diodor. Sicul. lib. 18.*

‡ *Diod. Laertius in Phalereo.*

A. M.  
4001, &c.  
Ant. Chriſt.  
1, &c.  
aut. Ær.  
Vulg. 3.  
from Joſ.  
lib. 13.  
c. 19. to  
the end of  
lib. 15

That De-  
metrius  
might have  
the direc-  
tion of the  
king's li-  
brary.



A. M. 4001, &c.  
Ant. Chris.  
1, &c.  
ant. Afr.  
Vulg. 3.  
from Jos.  
lib. 13.  
c. 19 to  
the end of  
10. 15.

For, whatever some may think of the servile employment of looking after books, it is very well known<sup>1</sup> that, at Rome, one of the prime cardinals always holds the office of librarian to the Pope; and, as to the king's library in France, it is not long since the archbishop of Rheims, who is by his place primate of the Gallican church, and first peer of the whole realm, thought it no disparagement to his honour to be appointed to the same office.

That the  
king mig  
put que-  
stions to the  
interpre-  
ters.

It is natural to suppose, that a prince, who himself was a man of great learning, and had always a long train of learned men about him, should be for making some trial of the abilities of the Jewish interpreters, before he set them about the work; and therefore, if the questions which the king made, and the answers which the interpreters returned, be but adapted to their respective circumstances, instead of being an argument against they will prove a confirmation of the truth of the account which Josephus gives us of this transaction. Now, whoever looks into these questions and answers, as they are set down in Aristeas, will find, that the former (which are said to have been suggested by Demetrius) are chiefly philosophical, such as favour of the musæum or college of learned men that had lately been erected at Alexandria; <sup>2</sup> such as became an inquisitive Heathen philosopher, who, in a great measure, was grown weary of the gross polytheism and idolatry of the Egyptians, and, by his conversation with the Alexandrian Jews, more inclinable to the belief that one invisible, and true God, whom they worshipped: And that the latter are every one made with such a distinct regard to God, and his providence, as is always uppermost both in the words and writings of every wise and religious Jew.

and give  
the sum of  
money that  
is related.

The character which Appian gives us of Ptolemy Philadelphus, is, that 'he was the most splendid and magnificent of all the kings of his time in expending his money;' and therefore we may less wonder at his giving so much for the redemption of the captive Jews<sup>b</sup>, when we find him bestowing upon Aratus the Sicyonian, for his having being serviceable to him in the collection of some books and pictures, the sum of one hundred and fifty talents to adjust the properties and settle the peace of his

<sup>1</sup> Prideaux's Connect. an. 284.

<sup>2</sup> Whiston's Defence of

Aristeas. <sup>a</sup> In præfat. ad opera hist. <sup>b</sup> Plutarch in Arato.

his city; <sup>c</sup> may less wonder at his sending away the Jewish interpreters so amply rewarded, when we find him presenting the Roman ambassadors every one of them with a crown of gold, and, upon their taking their leave, heaping upon them gifts of an inestimable value; may less wonder, in short, at his profusion in this particular, when we find him <sup>d</sup> (as Athæus assures us) spending two thousand two hundred talents in one pompous festival to Bacchus.

A. M.  
4001, &c.  
Ant. Chrif.  
1, &c.  
ant. Ær.  
Vilg. 3.  
from Jos.  
lib. 13  
c 19  
the end of  
lib. 15.

His own inclination, <sup>e</sup> prompted by Demetrius Phalareus, led him to be prodigiously fond of the most complete and authentic copies of any curious book. Fifteen talents he gave for such copies of the tragedies of Æschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides, and yet these were already written in Greek, and needed no translation; <sup>f</sup> whereas the bare permission of a version of the Jewish law (that nation's peculiar and inestimable treasure) was a favour that never had been asked before, and what, upon any common application, would probably have been denied: And, as the authentickness of this version must entirely depend on the skill and faithfulness of the Jewish translators, (since they were the only persons that understood the Hebrew language,) the king had no other way to obtain a confidence herein, than by gaining the entire good opinion of the high-priest and people of the Jews.

Upon the whole therefore we may conclude, that tho' the sums bestowed upon the Jews upon account of this translation be very large, yet, considering the king's vast liberality upon other occasions, the objection would have been stronger, had the sums been less; since, upon the highest computation, his whole expence in redeeming the captives, in presents to the temple and altar, and in rewards to the interpreters and high-priest, being all put together, does not amount to so much as he spent in one festival to Bacchus.

In so great and pompous a court, as this of Philadelphus must needs have been, we need not be solicitous to answer the objection of his being addressed to by way of letter, or memorial, even by persons that had otherwise a constant access to him; because, in matters of great importance,

Other testimonies for the truth of Josephus.

<sup>c</sup> Livy xiv. : Eutropius, lib. 2. Diog. <sup>d</sup> Laertius in Strato. <sup>e</sup> Van Dale's Dissert. de Aristea. <sup>f</sup> Whiston's Defence of Aristea.

A. M.  
4001, &c.  
Ant. Chr.  
r, &c.  
ant. Ær.  
Vulg 3  
from Jos.  
lib. 13  
c. 19. to  
the end of  
lib. 15

importance, this, in most courts, is the common method of proceeding even now. But this we may safely add, that how warmly soever some modern critics have attacked the history of this Septuagint version, yet the ancient testimonies of such authors as have made mention of it, viz. of Alexander Polyhistor<sup>ε</sup>, a learned Heathen, who was greatly inquisitive about the affairs of the Jews; of Aristobulus, the Peripatic philosopher, and tutor to Ptolemy Philopater; of Philo, who lived at Alexandria, the very place where this version was made; of Tertullian, one of the most accurate writers of Christian antiquity; of Eusebius, a learned and faithful ecclesiastical historian; of St Jerom, a vehement enemy to this very version, as compared with the Hebrew copy; and of several others, that might be produced, are a confirmation of what Josephus (a priest of that very temple, to which the presents from Philadelphus were sent) relates concerning it, and such strong holds and fastnesses, as the maintainers of its antiquity have not yet been prevailed upon to give up.

## DISSERTATION V.

### *Of the Profane History during this period.*

The success-  
ion in the  
old Assy-  
rian em-  
pire.

**M**OST of the historical facts in profane authors, that had any relation to the sacred records, we have, in the course of this history, endeavoured to abridge, and reduce into notes, at their proper periods; and have nothing more now to do, but only to take notice of some extraordinary and remarkable events in the Persian, Grecian, and Roman empires, down to our Saviour's time, which did not then so properly fall in with our design.

After the dissolution of the ancient Assyrian monarchy, by the death of Sardanapalus, there arose up two lesser empires in its stead; one founded by Arbaces, governor of Media, and the other by Belesis, governor of Babylon, the two principal commanders who headed the conspiracy, whereby the former empire was brought to an end.

Arbaces (who in Scripture<sup>h</sup> is called *Tiglath Pileser*) had the larger share of empire, and therefore fixed his seat

<sup>ε</sup> Ibid.

<sup>h</sup> 2 Kings xv. 29 and xvi. 7. 10.



seat at Nineveh, where the former Assyrian kings used to have their residence, and there governed his new-erected empire for nineteen years. He was succeeded by his son Salmanassar; Salmanassar by Sennacherib; Sennacherib by Esarhaddon; Esarhaddon by Suosduchinus, (in the book of Judith called *Nabubodonosor*;) Suosduchinus by Chyniladanus; Chyniladanus by Nabopolassar; and Nabopolassar by his son Nebuchadnezzar the Great, of whom we have said so many things; Nebuchadnezzar the Great was succeeded by his son Evilmerodach; Evilmerodach by Neroglossor; and Neroglossor by Belshazzar; in whom the united empire of the Assyrians and Babylonians terminated.

A. M.  
4001, &c.  
Ant. Chris.  
1, &c.  
aut. Ær.  
Vulg. 3.  
from Jos.  
lib. 13.  
c. 19, to  
the end of  
lib. 5

Belshazzar (who in Scripture is called <sup>k</sup> *Baladan*) took up his residence at Babylon, and was succeeded by his son Merodach; but who were his successors, we have no account to be depended on, only we know, that Esarhaddon, king of Assyria, conquered the kingdom of Babylon, and that he and his successors Suosduchinus and Chyniladanus possessed it, until Nabopolassar, governor of Babylon, and general of the Assyrian forces, joining his arms with Astyages, the son of Cyaxares king of Media, slew Chyniladanus, took and destroyed Nineveh, and translated the empire to Babylon.

After the terrible blow which Sennacherib's forces received in Judea, the Medes, understanding in what a low condition he was, returned to Nineveh, immediately shook off his yoke, and made Dejoces (who in Scripture is called *Arphaxad*) their king; who, having beautified and enlarged Ecbatana, made it the royal seat of his kingdom, and there reigned for fifty-three years. He was succeeded by his son Phraortes; Phraortes, by Cyaxares I.; Cyaxares I. by Astyages; Astyages, by Cyaxares II. called in Scripture *Darius the Mede*, who conquered Belshazzar, and began to lay the foundation of the Persian monarchy, which, during his life, was called the empire of the Medes and Persians, but, after his death, was united by Cyrus.

Cyrus succeeding his father Cambyfes in the kingdom of Persia, and his uncle Cyaxares, in the kingdom of the Medes, and empire of Babylon, by this means founded the second great monarchy, which was the Persian. His wars with the Assyrians, his defeat of Cræsus king of Ly-

Cyrus,  
founds the  
Persian em-  
pire.

i Judith i. 1.

k Isaiah xxxix. 1.

M. A.  
4001, &c.  
Ant. Chriſt.  
1, &c.  
ant. Ær.  
Vulg. 3.  
from Joſ.  
lib. 13.  
c. 19. to  
the end of  
lib. 15.

His wars  
with the  
Scythians,  
and death.

dia, his wonderful taking of Babylon, and obliging all the east to submit to his power, are subjects that we have already touched upon, either in our history or notes: but there are some things in his war with the Scythians, (might we but credit their story,) that justly deserve our observation.

<sup>1</sup> At the time when he made his expedition into Scythia, Tomyris was queen thereof, a woman of great courage, and bravery of mind; for, though she could have hindered Cyrus's army from passing the river Araxes, she permitted them to do it, in confidence of fighting them with more advantage within her own dominions, and of making their retreat more difficult, by their having the river on their backs. Cyrus took this opportunity to pass the river, and, having marched a little into the country, and pitched his camp, the next day he abandoned it as if he had fled for fear, leaving plenty of wine, and other provisions behind him. Tomyris having intelligence of this, sent her son, with the third part of her forces, in pursuit of the enemy; but when he came to their camp, as if he had been sent to a banquet, not a battle, he suffered his men (who were strangers to that kind of liquor) to intoxicate themselves with wine to such a degree, that when Cyrus marched his army back again in the night time, and came upon them, he found them incapable of fighting, or of making any resistance, and therefore put them all to the sword.

Upon the loss of so great an army, and (what more nearly concerned her) the loss of her only son, Tomyris did not betake herself to tears, the usual refuge of women upon such occasions, but cast about in her mind how she might revenge herself of the enemy; which, in a short time, she did by the like stratagem, and with the like success. For, observing that the Persians were now grown secure by reason of their late victory, she retired before them with her army, as if she had been afraid to venture the decision of a battle, until she had drawn Cyrus unawares into a defile, where, having placed an ambuscade in the mountains, she killed two hundred thousand of his men (insomuch, that there was not one left to carry home the news) and himself upon the spot. Thus fell this great prince, in the seventieth year of his age, though  
Xenophon,

<sup>1</sup> Justin, lib. 1. c. 8.

Xenophon, and from him other historians, are clearly of opinion, that he died peaceably in his \* bed.

A. M.  
4001, &c.  
Ant. Chriſt.  
1, &c.  
aut. ær.  
Vulg. 2.  
from Joſ.  
lib. 13.  
c. 19. to  
the end of  
lib. 15.

The ſucceſſion of the  
Perſian em-  
pire.  
The time  
when Zoro-  
aſtres lived,

He was ſucceeded by his ſon Cambyſes, and Cambyſes by the Magian, who, under the falſe name of *Smerdis*, uſurped the throne, and brought diſcredit upon the whole ſect, until its character came to be reſtored again by the management and reformation of Zoroaſtres.

At what time this Zoroaſtres (or Zarduſht, as the Perſians call him) lived, there is a wide difference both among the Greek and oriental writers; ſince ſome of them will have it, that he lived many years before the flood, others, in the days of Abraham, and others again, not before the reign of Darius the ſon of Hyſtaſpes. Moſes (according to the ſentiments of ſeveral learned men) ſpeaks of the Py-ræa, or temples conſecrated to the worſhip of fire, when he brings in God threatening the Iſraelites <sup>m</sup>, to overthrow their high places, and deſtroy their Chaminim, or places appointed for the worſhip of fire, and to caſt their carcaſes upon the carcaſes of their idols; though they are certainly miſtaken who think, that the fire which he ordered to be kept always burning upon the altar of the Lord, was in imitation of the fire of the Magians.

A a 2

If

\* Xenophon adds. (lib. 8.) That finding his death approaching, he called his nobility together, his two ſons, Cambyſes and Tanaoxares, to his bed ſide, and after a long ſpeech concerning the immortality of the ſoul, and rewards or puniſhments conſequent upon every man's good or ill conduct in this life, he exhorted his ſons, by the ſtrongeſt arguments, to a perpetual concord and agreement, and uttered many other things, which make it not improbable that he received the knowledge of the true God from Daniel, when he governed Shuſhan in Perſia. Strabo aſſures us, (lib. 15.) that he was buried in a city called *Pafagardes* which himſelf had built, and where his monument, even in his time, was, with this inſcription. ' O vir, ' quicunque es, et undecunque advenis, neque enim te adven- ' turum ignoravi: Ego ſum Cyrus, qui Perſis imperium conſti- ' tui; puſillum hoc terræ, quo meum tegitur corpus, mihi ne ' invid eas.' This very tomb Alexander the Great (according to Q. Curtius) opened, either in hopes of ſome treaſure, which he imagined might have been there depoſited, or with a deſire rather to do honour to his remains; for ſo we are told, that he cauſed the coffin, wherein his body lay, to be covered with his own garment, and a crown of gold to be ſet upon it: All which gives credit to the account we have in Xenophon, but derogates not a little from Herodotus, who leaves his body in the hand of Tomyris; *Raleigh's hiſt. book 3. c. 6.*

<sup>m</sup> Ezek. vi. 4. &c.



A. M.  
4007, &c.  
Ant. Chrii.  
1, &c.  
aut Ær.  
Vulg. 3.  
from Jos.  
lib. 13. c.  
19. to the  
end of lib.

15.

An account  
of him.

If then we suppose that Zoroastres was the first author of the worship of fire, we must acknowledge him more ancient than Moses, but if we look upon him only as the reformer or restorer of it, (though we cannot tell the precise time when he flourished,) it must not be long after the Magians fell into disgrace, and may therefore very properly be thought to be in the reign of Darius Hystaspes.

He was a man of a mean and obscure parentage; \* by birth and education very probable a Jew, and (as some suppose) a servant to the Prophet Daniel; because he was certainly a man of great learning, and thoroughly acquainted with the books of Moses. As soon as he took upon him the prophetic office, he retired into a cave, and there lived a long time as a recluse, pretending to be abstracted from all worldly considerations, and to be given wholly to prayers and divine meditations. In this retirement

\* To this purpose we may observe, that most of his reformation in the old religion of the Magians are taken either from the ancient writings, or the ancient usages of the Jews. For whereas Moses heard God speak to him out of a flame of fire in the bush, Zoroastres pretended, that he in like manner heard God speak to him, at the time when he was taken up to heaven. Whereas the Jews had a visible Shechinah of the divine presence among them, resting over the mercy seat in the holy of holies, unto which they turned themselves when they prayed, Zoroastres taught his disciples, that in the sun, and in the sacred fires in their temples, God more especially dwelt; and therefore he obliged them to offer up all their prayers with their faces turned to both these. Whereas the Jews had a sacred fire which came down from Heaven upon their altar of burnt-offerings, which as long as Solomon's temple stood, was preserved with the utmost care from extinguishing, Zoroastres pretended, that when he was in heaven, he brought some of that holy fire out of which God spake unto him; and therefore he enjoined that it should be kept with diligent care, and that all the fires, on the altars of new-erected fire-temples, should at first be lighted only from thence: And whereas the Jews were very nice in using no wood on the altar of their temple, but what was reputed clean, and had it therefore all barked and examined, before it was laid on, and, when it was laid on, allowed of no bellows to blow it, but left it to kindle and flame out of itself, Zoroastres ordained his followers, in relation to the sacred fires of their temples, to observe both these particulars, commanding them to bark all their wood, and use no other means for the kindling it up into a flame, but the pouring oil,

and

ment he composed the book †, wherein all his pretended revelations are contained. <sup>a</sup> The first part of it consists of a liturgy, which the Magians, in all their oratories and fire-temples, make use of to this day. The rest is an historical account of the life, actions, and prophices of its author, the several articles and branches of his superstition, together with rules and exhortations to morality, wherein he is very pressing and exact, except his allowing of incest; and the whole being interspersed with several things taken out of the Old Testament, abundantly shews that his original was from the Jews.

A. M.  
4001, &c.  
Ant. Chr. f.  
1, &c.  
aut. A. r.  
Vulg. 3.  
from Jos.  
lib. 13.  
c. 19. to  
the end of  
lib. 15.

Upon leaving his retirement, he went into India among the Brachmans, where having learned all their knowledge in mathematics, astronomy, and natural philosophy, he came back, and taught his disciples these sciences, which gained him so great a reputation, that, for many years after, a learned man, and a Magian, became equivalent terms. Nay, he pretended, that, once upon a time, he was taken up into heaven to be instructed in those doctrines, which he was to deliver unto men; that there he heard God speak out of the midst of a great and bright flame of fire; and for this reason he taught his followers, that fire was the truest representation of the divine presence, and the sun (as the most perfect fire) the more immediate throne of his glory; that, of the fire from whence God spake, he upon his return brought some

and leaving it to the blasts of the open air: And that he should, in so many singular and unobvious things, imitate the Jewish religion in the scheme of his reformatations, it can hardly be imagined, without supposing, that at first he had his education in it; nor is it improbable, that if (as some think) he was the disciple of Daniel, his seeing that great and good man arrive to such a height of dignity, by being a true prophet of God, might put him upon the thoughts of being a false one, in hopes that, if he acted his part well, he might obtain to himself the like advancement; *Lightfoot's Temple service*; *Hyde's Religio veterum Persarum*; and *Prideaux's Connection*, anno 486.

† This book is called *Zendavesta*, and by contraction *Zenda*, which signifies a *Fire-kindler*, such as a tinder box is with us; and this fantastical name the impostor gave it, because, as he pretended, all that would read this book, and meditate thereon, might from thence kindle in their hearts the fire of all true love to God, and his holy religion; *Prideaux's Connection*, anno 486.

<sup>a</sup> Ibid,

A. M.  
4007, &c.  
Ant. Chriſt.  
7, &c.  
aut. Ær.  
Vulg. 3.  
from Job.  
lib. 13  
c. 19. to  
the end of  
lib. 15.

And his  
renew's.

some with him, and placed it on the altar of the first fire-temple which he erected; from whence (as they say) it was propagated to all the rest; and this is the reason they give for keeping it so carefully, and treating it with so much superstition.

Having thus qualified himself to be a prophet, he made his first appearance in Medea, in the city of Ziz, say some, or in Ecbatana, (now Tauris,) according to others; where the principal doctrines that he professed (as a refinement upon what the old Magians maintained) were these,—  
 ‘ That there was one supreme being, independent, and  
 ‘ self-existing from all eternity; that, under him there  
 ‘ were two angels, one the angel of light, who is the au-  
 ‘ thor and director of all good, and the other angel of  
 ‘ darkness, who is the author and director of all evil, and  
 ‘ that these two, out of the mixture of light and darkness,  
 ‘ made all things; that they are in perpetual struggle with  
 ‘ each other, and that where the angel of light prevails,  
 ‘ there the most is good, where the angel of darkness,  
 ‘ there the most is evil; that this struggle shall continue  
 ‘ unto the end of the world, when there shall be a gene-  
 ‘ ral resurrection, a day of judgment, and a retribution to  
 ‘ every one according to his works; and that after this,  
 ‘ the angel of darkness and his disciples shall go into a  
 ‘ world of their own, where they shall suffer, in everlast-  
 ‘ ing darkness, the punishments of their evil deeds; and  
 ‘ the angel of light and his disciples shall go also into a  
 ‘ world of their own, where they shall receive, in everlast-  
 ‘ ing light, the reward due to their good deeds, whereup-  
 ‘ on they shall remain separated for ever, and light and  
 ‘ darkness are to be no more mixed together to all eterni-  
 ‘ ty.’ And all this the remainder of that sect (which is  
 now in Persia and India) do, after so many ages, still hold  
 without any variation, even to this day.

After Zoroastres had acted the part of a prophet in Medea, and there settled all things according to his intentions, he removed from thence into Bactria, the most eastern province of Persia, and there settling in the city of Balch (which lies on the river Oxus, in the confines of Persia) under the protection of Hystaspes the father of Darius, he soon spread his imposture through all that province with success. From Bactria he went next

to



to the royal court at Susa, where he managed his pretensions with so much address and insinuation, that he made Darius likewise a profelyte, and, from his example, drew over the courtiers, nobility, and great men of that city into the same profession: But when, upon his return into Balch, he attempted the like upon Agarisp, king of the oriental Scythians, and a zealous Sabian, and pretended an authority from Darius to that purpose, the Scythian prince resented it with such indignation, that he invaded Bactria with an army, and, having there defeated the forces that opposed him, slew Zoroastres, with all the priests of his patriarchal church amounting to the number of eighty persons, and demolished all the fire-temples in the province; but, it was not long before Darius \* fell upon him, and revenged the injury.

A. M.  
4001. &c.  
Ant. Chris.  
1. &c.  
ant. Afr.  
Vulg. 3.  
from Jos.  
1 b. 13. c.  
19. to the  
end of  
lib. 15.

This Darius was one of the seven lords, who slew the false Smerdis; and by an artifice he obtained the kingdom of Persia; but it was by the cruel policy of Zopyrus, that he made himself master of the city of Babylon. This city, having for many years, during the Babylonish empire, been mistress of the east, and domineered over all its neighbouring countries, could not bear the subjection it was fallen under to the Persians; especially since the removal of the imperial seat to Sushan, whereby its wealth and grandeur were much diminished. Taking the advantage therefore of the late revolution which had happened in the Persian empire, the Babylonians resolved to set up for themselves; and accordingly, having stored the city with a sufficient quantity of arms and provisions, in the fifth year of the reign of this Darius, they broke out into an open revolt.

Darius's taking of Babylon.

\* The city, by reason of the strength and height of its walls, was impregnable against all storms, batteries, and assaults; and, as it was furnished with provisions for a great many years, and had large quantities of void ground within the walls, from whence it might annually be

\* After he had overthrown him with a great slaughter, and driven him out of the province, he rebuilt all the fire-temples, and especially that of Balch, which, as it was the patriarchal temple of the sect, he failed not to erect with a grandeur suitable to its dignity, and had it called after his own name. For he was a zealous promoter of this religion, and, after the death of its author, continued to propagate it with the same ardor as before; *Prideaux's Connection, anno 486.*

° *Prideaux's Connection, an. 516.*

A. M. 4001, &c.  
Ant. Chrif.  
1, &c.  
ant. JEr.

be fupplied with more; could never have been ftarved into a furrender, but muft have worn out Darius, and all his army, had it not been for a stratagem of Zopyrus, one of his commanders.

Valg. 3.  
from Jof.  
lib. 13. c.  
9. to the  
end of lib.  
15.

The army had now lain before the city a year and eight months, without having made any great progrefs in the fieve, which raifed the indignation of Zopyrus to fuch a degree, that, having cut off his nofe and ears, and mangled his body all over with ftripes, in this condition he fled to the befieged, and feigning to them, that he had fuffered all this by the cruel uſage of Darius, he thereby infinuated himſelf ſo far into their confidence, that, at length, they made him the chief commander of their forces, which truſt he made uſe of to deliver the city (which could not otherwiſe have been taken) into his maſter's hand; and, for this remarkable piece of ſervice, was rewarded with the higheſt honours that his prince could heap on him, all his life after.

His defeat  
in Greece

By this hardy ſtratagem Darius recovered the city of Babylon; but in his war with the Grecians he was ſo far from having any good ſucceſs, that, <sup>p</sup> at the battle of Marathon, his vaſt army received a total overthrow by Miltiades, prince of the Thracian Chersonesus, and his two generals, Dotis and Artaphernes, were forced to return home with baffle and diſgrace.

The defeats  
of Xerxes.

He was ſucceeded by his ſon Xerxes, who, <sup>q</sup> after ten years preparation, renewed the war with the Grecians, but with worſe ſucceſs than his father: For, at the ſtreights of Thermopylæ, Leonidas, the king of the Lacedemonians, with an handful of men, ſlew twenty thouſand of his forces: At the ſtreights of Salamis, Themistocles, the general of the Athenians, ruined the greateſt part of his fleet: In Sicily, Gelo, the king thereof, made great havock among his confederates the Carthaginians: At Platea, Pausanias ſlew his general Mardonius, and cut his army to pieces; and at Mycale, Leotychides both vanquiſhed his troops by land, and burnt the remainder of his fleet; ſo that never was there a man, who ſet out with ſo great an armament both by ſea and land, and returned in ſo abject and diſgraceful a manner. He was ſucceeded by his ſon Artaxerxes; Artaxerxes, by Xerxes II.; Xerxes II. by his brother Sogdianus;

<sup>p</sup> Herod. lib. 6.; Juſtin, lib. 2. c. 9.  
Diod. Sic. lib. 2.

<sup>q</sup> Herod. lib. 2.;

Sogdianus; and Sogdianus, by his brother Ochus, who is commonly called *Darius Nothus*. Ochus was succeeded by Artaxerxes II. surnamed *Mnemon*; Artaxerxes II. by another Ochus, who took upon him the name of *Artaxerxes III.*; this Ochus, by *Sarjes*; and *Arjes*, by *Darius Codomannus*; in whom the Persian monarchy, terminating by Alexander the Great, was translated to Greece.

The army which Alexander carried into Asia, according to the highest computation, amounted to no more than thirty thousand foot, and five thousand horse; and yet, with these few forces, he not only attempted, but accomplished likewise the conquest of the whole Persian empire, and added India likewise to his acquisitions: But what was the most remarkable thing in his expedition, is, that he set out upon it with no more than seventy talents, which was scarce enough to supply the army with necessaries for thirty days; but, as he trusted in providence, providence did not fail him. In a few days, at the river Granicus, he encountered Darius, and, having vanquished his troops, though they were five times more in number, he thereby got possession of a great part of his treasure, and all the provinces of the Lesser Asia. Not long after this, at Issus in Cilicia, he gave him another defeat; where, having taken all his camp, bag and baggage, with his mother, wife, and children, he left an hundred thousand Persians dead upon the field of battle: And about two years after, not far from Arbela, he gave him a final overthrow: for there, with no more than fifty thousand men, he vanquished the vast army of the Persians, which consisted of above twenty times as many, and thereby determined the fate of the Persian, and established the third great monarchy, which was the Grecian, in the person of Alexander. It lasted no longer than six years and ten months: For, after his death, it was divided among his generals, and, as Judea lay between Syria and Egypt, according as their arms prevailed, it was generally under the dominion of one of these, until the Roman power began to exert itself.

The Romans, having built their city, and out of the neighbouring villages<sup>r</sup> (as we related the story before) furnished themselves with wives, for seven successions lived under the dominion of kings; but in the family of Tarquin, which had justly incurred the people's displeasure,

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sure,

A. M.  
4007, &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
1. &c.  
aut Ær.  
Vulg. 3.  
from Jos.  
lib. 13.  
c. 19. to  
the end of  
lib. 15.

Alexander's successes, and establishment of the Grecian monarchy.

The rise of the Romans.



A. M. 4001, &c.  
Ant. chil  
1, &c.  
ant. Ær.  
Vulg. 3.  
from Jos.  
lib. 13.  
c. 19, to  
the end of  
lib. 15.

sure \*, that form of government was quite dissolved. Many, however, and fierce were the wars which, both in their regal and consular state, the Romans waged with the nations round about them, but their conquests were confined to the bounds of Italy only; nor was the glory of their name much known to foreign nations, until the war which they had with Pyrrhus, King of Epirus, gave them an opportunity \* to signalize their bravery and greatness of mind, which excited Ptolemy Philadelphus, then king of Egypt, to send them an embassy, congratulating their successes, and desiring to enter into alliance with them.

To

\* To make his way to the throne, he murdered his father-in-law Servius Tullius, and, upon his ascending it, put all his friends to death. The affairs of the state he managed by himself alone, slighted the senate, diminished their authority, cut off several of them upon frivolous pretences, and seized upon their estates. Among these Marcus Junius was one, who left behind him a son named *Lucius Junius*; but he, fearing the fate that his father and brother had undergone, counterfeited the fool (and was thence called *Brutus*) so very artfully, that he was taken by Tarquin into his house to make his children sport. In the mean time, Sextus, one of Tarquin's sons, inflamed with the beauty of Lucretia, got privately to Collatia, where she resided, and ravished her, whereupon she sent for her father from Rome, and her husband Collatinus from the camp, (which was then before Ardea,) desiring them to bring along with them some of their particular friends. Publius Valerius came with her father Lucretius, and Lucius Junius Brutus with her husband; to whom, as soon as they were arrived, she related the whole story, and then with a poniard stabbed herself to the heart. Upon the sight of this they were all filled with grief and indignation; but, to their great surprise, Brutus, throwing off the disguise of his folly, declared his resolution, and made them swear upon the bloody poniard to assist him in revenging this, and the other wickednesses of Tarquin, and his family by expelling him and them from the government, which accordingly they did, thereby putting an end to the regal power at Rome, and turning it into a consular state; *Hearne's System, lib. 3.*

\* One great instance of this appeared in the course of this war, which is thus related by Plutarch.—When Fabricius was consul, and at the head of his army, an unknown person came into the camp, and delivered him a letter from king Pyrrhus's chief physician, offering to take him off by poison, and so end the war without any farther hazard to the Romans, if he might have a reward proportionable to his service. Fabricius enraged at the villany of the man, and disposing the other consul to the same opinion, sent dispatches immediately to Pyrrhus

5 To make a return of the like respects, the Romans next year sent Q. Fabius Gurges, Cn. Fabius Pictor, and Q. Ogulinus, their ambassadors to the Egyptian court, whose behaviour, in that capacity, was very remarkable; for when the king, having invited them to supper, in the conclusion of the entertainment, presented each of them with a crown of gold, they accepted of the crowns, upon account of the honour that was done them, but, next morning, they crowned therewith the statutes of the king that stood in the public places of the city; and when again, at their audience of leave, he presented them with very valuable gifts, they took them indeed for fear that their refusal should give offence; but as soon as they were returned to Rome, they delivered them all into the public treasury, before they appeared in the senate to give an account of their embassy, whereby they declared, that they desired no other advantage from the service of the public, than the honour of discharging it well.

A. M.  
 4001 &c.  
 Ant. Chris.  
 1. &c.  
 aut Ær.  
 Vulg 3.  
 from Jos.  
 lib. 13  
 c. 19. to  
 end of lib.  
 15.  
 Their wars  
 with the  
 Cartha-  
 ginians.

This spirit of moderation and disinterestedness, while it continued in the state, and the many great instances of invincible courage and resolution, which upon all occasions they shewed, made the Romans of great note in the

B b 2

world,

to caution him against the treason. His letter was to this effect: Caius Fabricius, and Quintus Æmilius, consuls of the Romans, to Pyrrhus the king, health.

' You seem to have a very ill judgement both of your friends, and enemies. You will understand by this letter, which was sent to us, that you are in war with honest men, and trust knaves and villains: But we have not discovered this to you to insinuate into your favour, but lest your ruin might bring a reproach upon us, as if we had ended, this war by treachery, when we were not able to do it by our courage and virtue.' When Pyrrhus had read the letter, and made strict inquiry into the treason, he caused the physician to be executed, and, in acknowledgment of this civility of the Romans, sent to Rome the prisoner without ransom, and again employed Cineas to negotiate a peace for him. The Romans, who were above receiving from their enemy a recompence for not having been guilty of the vilest injustice, disdained to accept of the prisoners, without returning to him an equal number of Samnites and Tarentines; but, as for the peace, they would not suffer Cineas so much as to mention it, until Pyrrhus had removed his arms and forces out of Italy, and sailed back to Epirus in the same ships that brought him over; *Plutarch in Pyrrho.*

5 Livy, lib. 14.; Eutropius, lib. 2.; Valerius Maximus, lib. 4.

A. M.  
4001, &c.  
Ant. Chri.  
1, &c.  
aut Ær  
Vulg. 3.  
from Jos.  
lib. 13. c.  
19. to the  
end of l. b.  
15.

Their wars  
with the  
Carthagi-  
nians,

world, and after the defeat of the Carthaginians in the second Punic war, they became indeed the terror of all other nations.

Hannibal was certainly the most dangerous enemy that ever Rome had. As soon as war was declared between these two states, he left Spain, where he then was, and at the head of fifty thousand foot, and nine thousand horse, marched directly towards Italy. He crossed the Pyrenæan mountains into Gaul, crossed the Rofne, and came to the foot of the Alps, which, in fifteen days time, he got over, but not without much danger and difficulty, as well as the loss of half his army. When he got footing in Italy, he defeated Scipio one of the Roman consuls at Pavia, and his colleague Sempronius, in another action near Trebia. Near the lake Thrasymene he cut off the Roman army, and their consul Flaminius, even after he had destroyed a detachment of forty thousand, which the other consul Servilius had sent to his assistance; but in the famous battle at Cannæ, he made the greatest slaughter of them: For therein he defeated the whole army, and slew Æmilius, one of their consuls; killed 50,000 men, two Questors, 21 Tribunes 80 of the Senetorian, and of the Equestrian order a much greater number.

This last defeat caused a dreadful consternation in Rome, but did not rebate the people's courage, who still refused to hearken to any overtures of peace; till, having sent Scipio the younger into Africa, they by that means gave the Carthaginians so much disturbance, that they were forced to recal Hannibal, who, coming to a decisive battle, was routed by the Romans, and his countrymen forced to sue for a peace, which was granted them upon terms, very honourable and advantageous to Rome.

After this peace with the Romans, Hannibal<sup>1</sup> lived quietly at Carthage for the space of six years; but, being under a suspicion of holding correspondence with Antiochus, surnamed *the Great*, (between whom and the Romans there was at that time a misunderstanding,) and of plotting with him to bring a new war upon Italy, some of his enemies at Rome procured ambassadors to be sent to Carthage, in order to enquire into the matter, and if they found any reason for it, to have him delivered into their hands; which when Hannibal understood, he made his escape before the ambassadors had time to deliver their  
message,

<sup>1</sup> Livy, lib. 33.; Cornelius Nepos, de Hannibale; Justin, lib. 31. c. 2, 3.



message, and put himself under the protection of Antiochus. A. M. 4201, &c. Ant. Chris. 1, &c. ant. Æt. Vulg. 3. from Jos. lib. 13. c. 19. to the end of lib. 15.

\* Antiochus, at this time, was in debate with himself on the point of entering into war with the Romans, but at the coming of Hannibal he soon determined for war; and had he taken Hannibal's advice of carrying it into the bowels of Italy, he might probably have met with a better event; \* but his resolution was to begin it in Greece, where being shamefully defeated in every engagement, both by sea and land, he was forced at last to send an embassy to the Roman consuls, desiring conditions of peace, which were granted him upon these hard terms, — That he should pay the whole expences of the war, which were estimated at fifteen thousand talents of Eubæa†; should quit all Asia on that side the mount Taurus, and deliver up Hannibal the Carthaginian, and Thoas the Ætolian, as the chief incendiaries of the war: but as soon as these heard that a treaty was begun, they easily forsook what would be the result of it, and therefore both took care ‡ to get out of the way before it came to a conclusion.

† Next

‡ Livy, lib. 37. Justin, lib. 31. c. 8. Appian. de Syriacis.

\* Antiochus's army is said to have consisted of seventy thousand foot, twelve thousand horse and fifty-four elephants; whereas all the Roman forces amounted to no more than thirty thousand, and yet Antiochus was totally overthrown: For, in the field of battle, he lost fifty thousand foot, and four thousand horse; fourteen hundred were taken prisoners, and himself with much difficulty escaped to Sardis; *Appian. in Syriacis; Livy, lib. 37. and Justin, lib. 31. c. 7.*

† There is a difference between Livy and Polybius in this matter; for whereas in Polybius the words are, that the money to be paid to the Romans should be ἀργυρίου Ἀττικῆς ἀπέριον, Livy, making the meaning of the Greek phrase, rendered it Attick talents; whereas Polybius meant it only the Attick standard: For as the Eubæan talent was the greatest weight, so the Attick money was the finest silver of any in Greece, and by this treaty the money was to be paid according to both, *i. e.* the Romans, having conquered Antiochus, not only obliged him to pay this vast sum for his peace, but also made him pay it in talents of the highest weight, and of silver of the best and finest standard in all Greece; *Prideaux's Connection, anno 290.*

‡ What became of the Ætolian we are not concerned to inquire; but Hannibal, after he was deserted by Antiochus, fled to Prusias, king of Bithynia; where, being slighted by him, and in danger of being delivered to the Romans, it is generally

A. M.  
4001, &c.  
Ant. Chriſt.  
1, &c.  
ant. JEr.  
Vulg 3.  
from Joſ.  
lib. 13.  
c. 19. to  
the end of  
Ib. 15.

† Next to the Carthaginian war, the longeſt, and moſt obſtinate, that the Romans ever had, was the war which Mithridates King of Pontus (in the reign of Alexander Jannæus at Jeruſalem) waged with them. For, having

generally ſaid, that he put an end to his days, for which purpoſe he carried poiſon always about him concealed under the ſtone of his ring. This is the account we have in Livy, lib. 39. c. 51. and what Plutarch and the Roman ſatiriſt does more than allude to.

————— O gloria! vincitur idem,  
Nempe et in exilium præceps fugit, atque ibi magnus  
Mirandusque cliens ſedet ad prætoria regis,  
Donec Bithyno libeat vigilare tyranno.  
Finem animæ, quæ res humanas miſcuit olim,  
Non gladii, non ſaxa dabunt, non tela, ſed ille  
Cannarum vindex, ac tanti ſanguinis ultor.

Annulus, ————— JUVEN. Sat. 10.

He was born a ſoldier; and a continual exerciſe of arms made him a great captain. He was always juſt in his ſchemes, and imenſe in his views: Had an admirable genius at hitting the true means for the execution of his deſigns, and the greateſt artifice in acting without being diſcovered. He was infinite in expedients, and as ſkilful in recovering himſelf out of danger, as he was in drawing others into it. But then he was a perſon of no fidelity, no religion, no humanity, though he had the art of putting on the appearance of all theſe virtues, whenever he thought it ſubſerviant to his intereſt; *Vertot's Revolution of the Roman Republic.*

† The war with Jugurtha intervened indeed; but this was not of any long continuance, nor is it any where referred to in the ſacred hiſtory; however it may not be improper to mention thus much of it. — That this Jugurtha was nephew to Micipſa, king of Numidia, who left him two ſons, Adherbal and Hiempſal, both of whom Jugurtha murdered, and then uſurped their kingdom; that when the Romans were for calling him to an account for all this wickedneſs, he for a long while bribed the commiſſioners and generals that were ſent againſt him, till at length, being defeated firſt by Metellus, and afterwards by Marius, he was betrayed by Bocchus king of Mauritania, who was both his ally and father-in law; that being thus betrayed, and ſeized, he was laden with chains, and given up to Sylla, who delivered him into the hands of the General Marius, and he, in the triumph that was given him, dragged him like a ſlave at the wheels of his chariot; and that, after this ceremony was over, he was led to priſon, ſtripped of his royal robes, and then pushed naked into a dungeon, where he was condemned to be ſtarved to death; *Salluſti bellum Jugurthium.*

ving very unjustly seized on the kingdoms of Cappadocia and Bithynia, when the Romans interposed for the surrender of them to the persons to whom they had decreed them, he refused to obey, and thereupon hostilities ensued. \* For some time at first Mithradates was successful; but \* was very cruel, while he had the superiority; till having sent into Greece an army of three hundred and ten thousand men, under the command of three of his best generals, Sylla alone, with no more than fifteen thousand foot, and fifteen hundred horse, vanquished them all in several battles; and Fimbria, the next year, with another Roman army, pressed Mithradates himself so very close, that in Patana, a maritime town in Ætolia, he was in imminent danger of being made a prisoner, \* which terrified him to such a degree, that he sued for peace, which, upon these conditions, was granted him,——‘ That he should restore ‘ Bithynia to Nicomedes, and Cappadocia to Ariobarzanes, and to the Romans whatever he had taken from ‘ them in the late war; that he should content himself ‘ with his paternal kingdom of Pontus, yield to the Romans seventy of his ships; and pay them three thousand ‘ talents for the charge of the war.’

A. M.  
4001, &c.  
Ant. Chris.  
1, &c.  
aut. Ær.  
Vulg. 3.  
from Jos.  
lib. 13. c.  
19. to the  
end of lib.  
15.

But the terms of this peace were too hard long to be submitted to by a man of Mithridates’s spirit; and therefore, as soon as Nicomedes (who left the Roman people his heirs) was dead, he again seized on Bithynia and Paphlagonia.

\* Plutarch de Sylla; Appian. in Mithrid.; and Vell. Paterc. lib. 2. c. 23.

\* To this purpose historians have observed, that when, upon a defeat given the Roman forces, he had taken Manlius Aquilius, and Quintus Oppus, the two generals prisoners, he not only treated them with the utmost indignity, but afterwards with equal cruelty tortured them to death; and that, finding a great number of Romans and Italians, upon one occasion or other, dispersed through all the provinces and cities of the Lesser Asia, he sent secret orders to all the governors of these provinces, and magistrates of these cities, to put them all to death in one and the same day, which was accordingly executed with such rigour, that no less than eighty thousand (say some,) near double that number (say others,) of Romans and Italians were then massacred in that country; Appian. in Mithrid. epit.; Liv. lib. 77, 78. and L. Florus, lib. 3. c. 5.

\* Plutarch de Sylla; Appian. in Mithrid.; and Velleius Paterculus, lib. 2. c. 23.



A. M. 4001, &c. Ant. Chrii. 1, &c. 2ut Ær. Vulg. 3. from Jos. lib. 13. c. 19. to the end of lib. 15.

gonia, and the Romans again were forced to declare war against him.

<sup>2</sup> The two consuls for the year, Lucius Lucullus and Marcus Cotta, were sent to carry on this war; but the latter of these, being no ways skilled in military affairs, was overcome by Mithridates not far from Chalcedon, with the loss of most of his men, and a good part of his fleet, which was there to defend the coasts; till Lucullus, coming to his assistance not only drove Mithridates from the siege of Cyzirus, a city on the Propontis, that was in the Roman interest, but destroyed his fleet in the Hellespont, retook Bithynia and Paphlagonia from him, pursued him into his kingdom, besieged his very capital, and in one engagement ruined all his forces, and compelled him to flee into Armenia, there to implore the protection and assistance of Tigranes, his son-in-law.

Nor was this all; for, as soon as Lucullus understood that Tigranes was engaged in the war with him, he immediately marched his army against him, passed the Euphrates, passed the Tigris, defeated the forces that were sent against him, and having besieged his metropolis, with not the twentieth part of their number, in one battle gained a complete victory over an army of three hundred and six thousand men, that were coming to relieve it. Lucullus, in short, had in every place the advantage against these two confederate kings, <sup>a</sup> until, by the management of Publius Clodius, his own soldiers began to mutiny against him, insomuch, that having lost all the power and authority of a general, he was forced to deliver up the army to Pompey, and return to Rome.

Pompey, at his first entering upon the war, had taken into alliance with him Pharortes king of Parthia; but the mutiny which had happened in the latter end of Lucullus's time, had given Mithridates an opportunity of recovering a good part of his kingdom, and of getting together a great number of forces, wherewith he endeavoured to harass and distress the Roman army, till Pompey at length fell upon him by surprize, vanquished his troops, made him flee for shelter northward beyond the springs of the Euphrates, and then marched directly against his confederate Tigranes: But Tigranes, terrified at this, and not sufficiently provided to resist the power that was coming against him,

<sup>2</sup> Plutarch de Lucullo; and Appian. de Mithrid. <sup>a</sup> Plutarch de Lucullo et Pompeio; and Dion Cassius, lib. 36.

him, was resolved to surrender himself and his kingdom, both into the hands of the Roman general; who, upon his paying the Romans six thousand talents for making a causeless war against them, and yielding up to them all his conquests on this side the Euphrates, ordered, that he should still reign in his paternal kingdom of Armenia the Greater, and his son \* in Gordena and Sophena, two provinces that bordered upon it.

A. M.  
4001, &c.  
Ant. Chris.  
1, &c.  
aut. Ar.  
Vulg. 3.  
from Jos.  
lib. 13.  
c. 19. to  
the end of  
lib. 15.

<sup>b</sup> In the mean time Mithridates, having passed through several Scythian nations, came at last into the Cimmerian Bosphorus, (now the country of the Crim Tartars,) which was part of his dominions, and where he had appointed one of his sons, called *Machares* †, to reign. From hence he sent ambassadors to Pompey, offering in his



\* The reason why Pompey made this partition of Tigranes's kingdom, was, because Tigranes's son had put himself under the protection of the Romans. The father Tigranes had three sons by Cleopatra, the daughter of Mithridates, two of whom he had, upon light occasions, put to death; and therefore this third, not thinking his life safe within the power of so cruel a father, fled to Phraortes king of Parthia, whose daughter he had married, and by him was assisted to invade his father's dominions, and lay siege to Artaxata, his capital city; but, being routed by Tigranes the father, and driven out of the country, he betook himself to the Roman camp, and there, by way of a suppliant, cast himself at the feet of Pompey. Pompey at first received him very kindly; but when he seemed dissatisfied with the portion of his father's kingdom that he had allotted him, and was for exciting the nobility of Armenia to renew the war against the Romans, and the Parthians to join in it, Pompey put him among those whom he reserved for his triumph, and after that triumph, left him in prison; *Prideaux's Connection*, anno 66.

<sup>b</sup> Appian. in *Mithrid.* Epit. Liv. lib. 101.; and Dion Cassius, lib. 36.

† This young prince having been hard pressed by the Romans, while they lay at the siege of Sinape, and had then by their fleet the mastery of the Euxine sea, (which lay between Sinape and the kingdom of Machares,) had made a peace with them, and ever since maintained the terms of it. By this means he had much incensed his father, and dreaded his approach. While, therefore, he was on the way, he sent ambassadors to him to make his peace, and to urge in excuse, that what he had done in that respect was by the necessity of his affairs, and not by choice: But, finding his father implacable, and no possibility of making his escape, he slew himself, to avoid falling into his hands; *Appian. in Mithrid.*

A. M. 4001, &c.  
Ant. Chrif.  
1, &c.  
aut Ær.  
Vulg. 3.  
from Jof.  
lib. 13.  
c. 19. to  
the end of  
lib. 15.

his behalf, that in cafe he might be allowed to hold his paternal kingdom, (as Tigranes had been,) he would pay tribute to the Romans for it, and relinquish to them all his other dominions; but, when he underftood, that Pompey would liften to no propofals of peace, upon any other condition, than that he fhould come and furrender himfelf as Tigranes had done, he could not bring himfelf to fubmit to that; and therefore, having got together a confiderable number of forces out of the Scythian nations, wherewith he augmented his own army, and fent agents to engage the Gauls to join him, as foon as he approached the alps <sup>c</sup>, he refolved to make a desperate expedition \* through the way of Panonia, and the Tarentine Alps, into Italy itfelf, and there affault the Romans, as Hannibal had done, at their very doors. But when the army was to go upon their march, they were fo frightened at the thoughts of it, that they confpired againft him, and made Pharnaces, his fon their king.

Mithridates dreaded nothing fo much, as to fall into the hands of the Romans, and be led in triumph by them; and therefore, being apprehenfive, that his fon might deliver him to Pompey, and finding no poffibility of making his efcape, he retired into his apartment, and, having there diftributed poifon to his wives, his concubines, and daughters, that were with him, he took a dofe of it himfelf; but when he found it did not fufficiently operate upon him, he had recourfe to his fword, to finifh the work †, and fo died, after he had lived feventy-two years, and reigned fixty of them.

The

<sup>c</sup> Plutarch. De Pompeio; Dion Caffius, lib. 37.; Appian in Mithridatiis; Epitome Livii, lib. 106.; and L. Florus, lib. 3. c. 5.

\* A difperate expedition indeed, which contained a march of about two thoufand miles, through all thofe countries, which are now called *Tartaria Grimeæ, Podolia, Moldavia, Wallachia, Tranfylvania, Hungaria, Stiria, Carinthia, Tyrol, and Lombardy*, and over the three great rivers of the Borifthenes, the Danube, and the Po: *Prideaux's Connection, anno 64.*

† The character which Velleius Paterculus gives us of this great man, is expreffed in thefe words. ‘Per ea tempora Mithridates, Ponticus rex, vir neque filendus, neque dicendus sine cura. Bello acerrimus, virtute eximius, aliquando fortuna, semper animo maximus; consiliis dux, miles manu, odio in Romanos Hannibal:’ And from other historians we may learn,—That he was naturally a man of great capacity and under-



The Romans, after they had overcome all foreign powers and potentates that pretended to rival them, and thereby become masters of the greatest part of the then known world, fell soon into contests with one another about the government of it, and in every age some one appeared, who, at the expence of the public peace, affected to become the sole regent of it: but the most remarkable struggles of this kind; that any way relate to the scripture-history, were between Sylla and Marius, Cæsar and Pompey, Anthony and Augustus.

The occasion of the difference between Sylla and Marius was the choice of a general to the Mithridatic war. Marius<sup>d</sup>, who was by birth a Plebeian, and of a very mean parentage, had, by his military prowess, and interest with the common people, raised himself to the chief command of the Jugurthine war; and, in the war against the Teutones and Cimbri, had gained himself immortal honour;

C c 2

but,

understanding, which he had taken much care to improve: For he was not only well skilled in all the learning of those times, but, though he had two and twenty different nations under his dominions, yet he could speak to every one of them in their own proper language. He was a prince of great undertakings; and though he failed in most of those wherein he had to do with the Romans, yet, after every overthrow, we find him still rising up again with new vigour; for his last design of invading Italy sufficiently shows, that though his fortune often forsook him, yet his stout heart, his courageous spirit, and his enterprising genius never did. After all, he was a man of great vices, as well as virtues. His cruelty was shewn in the murder of his mother, and his brother, and the great number of his sons, friends, and followers, whom, at several times, and often on slight occasions, he put to death. His ambition was manifest by his many unjust invasions of other men's rights for the augmentation of his own dominions. And the many wicked methods of treachery, murder, and perfidiousness, that he took to accomplish his end. And his lust appeared in the great number of wives and concubines he had to serve it: For, in the one or other of these capacities, where-ever he found a handsome woman, he always took her to him, and carried some of these with him where-ever he went: But, when reduced to any distress, he always poisoned those whom he could not carry off, in like manner as he did his sisters and daughters in this case, that none of them might fall into the enemy's hands; *Velleius Paterculus, lib. 2. c. 18.; Valerius Maximus, lib. 8. c. 7.; Appian. in Mithridatis; and Plutarch, in Lucullo et Pompeio.*

<sup>d</sup> Verto's Revolutions of Rome, c. 10,

A. N.  
4001, &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
1, &c.  
aut. Ær.  
Vulg 3.  
from Jos.  
lib. 13.  
c. 19. to  
the end of  
lib. 15.  
Their several civil wars; between Sylla and Marius.

A. M.  
4001, &c.  
Ant. Chrif.  
1, &c.  
aut. Æt.  
Vulg 3.  
from Jof.  
lib. 13.  
c. 19. to  
the end of  
lib. 15.

but, being now upwards of feventy years old, in the late confederate war he had not fo well maintained his reputation; whether it was, that old age rebated his activity, or fortune had not thrown occafions of fignalifing himfelf in his way. Sylla, on the contrary, a Patrician by birth, and one of the moft illuftrious families in Rome, was lively, active, and impetuous, had gained great battles, taken confiderable towns, and, through the whole courfe of the war, fo diftinguifhed himfelf by his many and glorious fuccelfes, that he foon had the confulate conferred on him, and was afterwards declared governor of Afia Minor, and commander in chief in the war againft Mithridates. Marius, who thought that all the preferments of the commonwealth did of right belong to him, looked upon this preference as an injufice done him, and was therefore refolved to carry by force, what he had not attained by the people's choice.

To this purpofe, he drew over to his intereft a tribune, called Publ. Sulpitius, an inveterate enemy to Sylla, and who, by his power and authority among the people, procured a law to pafs, which took from Sylla the command of the army againft Mithridates, and conferred it upon Marius. Marius accordingly fent fome officers of his party to take poffeffion of the command of the army, until he himfelf could come to them; but Sylla had prevented them, and made fo fure of the affections of the foldiers, that inftead of obeying the orders fent from Marius, they killed his officers, and befought Sylla to lead them againft his enemies at Rome, before he transported them into Afia. Incenfed at the death of his officers, Marius had caufed feveral of Sylla's friends to be put to death, and their houfes to be plundered. This made Sylla haften his march to Rome, where he foon defeated the body which Marius and Sulpitius had raifed to oppofe him, and entered the city fword in hand. The decree, which transferrd the command of the army from him to Marius, he caufed to be repealed, and articles of impeachment drawn up againft C. Marius, young Marius his fon, the tribune Sulpitius, and twelve fenators, who were of their party, for having been the authors of the late infurrection. Hereupon they were declared enemies to the Roman commonwealth; were interdicted water and fire, *i. e.* all manner of fufenance, or affiftance from any body; had rewards fet upon their heads, and troops on all fides detached to hunt them down.

Sulpitius

Sulpitius in the search was apprehended by some of Sylla's soldiers, who cut off his head, and carried it to Rome, and nailed it to the Rostrum; but Marius had the good luck to make his escape, though † he underwent many dangers and hazards of his life, during the time of his exile.

In the mean time, Cornelius Cinna, who, though a Patrician by birth, had devoted himself to the Plebeian party; when once he was created consul, and Sylla was gone to his command in Asia, was for rescinding the decree, whereby

A. M.  
1001, &c.  
Ant. Chris.  
1, &c.  
aut. Ær.  
Vulg. 3.  
from Jos.  
lib. 13.  
c. 19. to  
the end of  
b 15.

† After he was upwards of seventy years of age, and had been six times consul, he was forced to fly from Rome on foot, without either friend or servant to accompany him; and to avoid Sylla's people, that pursued him, to throw himself into a morass, where he lay the whole night, sunk, and buried in mud up to the neck. In the morning, when he got out, and endeavoured to gain the sea-shore, in hopes of meeting some vessel to carry him out of Italy, he was known by the people of Minturnæ, seized and carried into the town, with a rope about his neck, all naked and muddy. The magistrates of the place, in obedience to the decree of the senate, which had attainted him, and set a price upon his head, sent a public slave, a Cimbrian by birth, to put him to death; but as the slave approached with his naked sword, "Canst thou, thou Barbarian," said he with a loud voice, "have the assurance to assassinate Caius Marius!" Whereupon the slave, frightened at the sound of a name so terrible to his countrymen, threw down his sword, and ran out of the prison in great disorder, crying out, "That it was not in his power to kill Marius." The magistrates of Minturnæ, looking on this as an interposition of heaven for the preservation of this great man, not only set him at liberty, but furnished him with a vessel, wherein he sailed first into the island of Ænaria, and thence, designing for Africa, he was forced, either by stress of weather, or want of water, to go on shore on the coasts of Sicily, where he met with new dangers. For a Roman quæstor, who had the chief command there, offered to seize him; so that Marius, being forced to defend himself, lost sixteen of his men, who made a stand just upon the shore whilst others helped him on board. From Sicily he sailed to Africa, and landed at Carthage; but from thence he was expelled by Sextilius, who, as prætor, commanded in that province, and, notwithstanding the rigour of the season, was forced to go on board, and spend a good part of the winter in his ship wandering up and down those seas, till, being informed of what was doing at Rome by a messenger from Cinna, he returned to Italy, joined Cinna, besieged Rome, and revenged himself too severely of his enemies; *Vertot's Revolutions of Rome, lib. 10.*



A. M.  
4001, &c.  
Ant. Chris.  
1, &c.  
221. A. R.  
Vulg. 3.  
from Jos.  
lib. 13.  
c. 19 to  
the end of  
lib. 15

whereby Marius was proscribed: But, when the senate perceived his design, they soon passed sentence upon him, declaring him fallen from the right of a citizen, and deprived of the dignity of a consul, and in his room they elected Lucius Merula. Cinna, who was naturally proud and fiery, upon hearing of this sentence, raised an army, with purpose to revenge himself upon the authors of it, and sent to Marius to come to his assistance, who, as he passed through the cities of Italy, was joined by some veterans that had formerly served under him, and, by promising freedom to all slaves that would come under his banner, had got together a good body of men. With these, and the forces that Cinna had collected, they both marched directly to Rome, where, of the two consuls, Octavius was killed on his tribunal, and Merula (to prevent the enemy from putting him to a worse death) had his veins opened; where several senators, of great note, were by the order of Marius murdered in the streets, their heads cut off, and laid upon the Rostrum, and their mangled bodies left to be devoured by dogs; and where he caused Sylla's house to be razed, his goods confiscated, his wife, children, and friends to be proscribed, and himself to be declared an enemy to the commonwealth, even while he was adding large provinces and kingdoms to the Roman state.

In the mean time, his wife, children, and friends, who had fled to his camp for protection, were continually soliciting him to turn his arms against his private enemies, and to free his country from these tyrants, who had so long oppressed it: So that, having concluded a peace with Mithridates upon very advantageous terms, he passed over with his army into Italy. But, before he was arrived, Marius was dead of a pleurisy, occasioned by excessive drinking, to which, in the decline of life, he accustomed himself; and young Marius, who inherited his father's cruelty, as well as power, entered into a close league with Cinna, and engaged Valerius Flaccus (whom they procured to be made consul) in their interest, and design of opposing Sylla. But Sylla, as soon as he landed in Italy, defeated Marius, and reduced him to the necessity of laying violent hands upon himself; and having vanquished all his other enemies, entered Rome at the head of his victorious forces, and there gave a loose to his licentious passion of revenge. All the poor people, that had appeared against him in arms, even though they came to beg quarter, he ordered to be massacred,

cred. Fourſcore ſenators, and fix hundred knights, together with an infinite number of the richeſt citizens of Rome, he cauſed to be proſcribed: Their ſons and grandſons he degraded from all their rights and privileges: Thoſe that ſhould protect or harbour any of them, he threatened with the like proſcription; and to thoſe that ſhould apprehend or murder any of them, he promiſed a reward of two talents; ſo that it became no uncommon thing for ſlaves, that had murdered their maſters, nay for children, that had murdered their fathers, to come, with their hands reeking in blood, to demand the reward of their treaſon or parricide.

Nor was it only the party that favoured Marius, which ſuffered in this barbarous manner, but, as Sylla<sup>e</sup> made little or no account of any man's life, he permitted his friends and officers, with impunity, to revenge themſelves of all their private enemies, inſomuch, that freſh numbers were proſcribed, and murdered every day, and no one, (eſpecially if he was rich and wealthy,) was ſecure of his life for a moment: Nay, to ſuch an exceſs of cruelty and arbitrarineſs did he proceed at laſt, that, without naming any particular perſons, he proſcribed whole cities and nations, and, by way of conſiſcation, ſeized on all the eſtates, houſes, and territories, belonging to ſuch towns in Italy as had declared for Marius during the civil war, which (to attach them more firmly to his intereſt) he took care to diſtribute among his ſoldiers.

Some, however, that were about him, and had probably been benefited by theſe uſurpations, being apprehenſive that ſuch violent proceedings might not laſt long, (to give them the better ſanction, and ſome colour of law) adviſed him to take upon him the office, not of a temporary, but perpetual dictator. The power of this ſupreme magiſtrate was boundleſs. The authority of the conſuls, and all other magiſtrates, except that of the tribunes, was ſuſpended by it. He had power of life and death over his fellow-citizens, was ſole arbiter of peace and war, was at liberty to raiſe or diſband forces as he thought fit, and under no obligation to give an account of his conduct to any body. In a word, he had all the power of the moſt abſolute king, (greater indeed than any of the ancient kings of Rome ever had;) but then it was only in the times of the greateſt exigencies of the commonwealth, when it was endangered either by powerful enemies

<sup>e</sup> Vertot's *Revolutions of Rome*, lib. 10.

A. M.  
4001, &c.  
Ann. Chris.  
1, &c.  
ant. Abr.  
Vulg. 3.  
from Jos.  
lib. 13.  
c. 19. to  
the end of  
lib. 15.

mies abroad, or by civil commotions at home, that such an officer was appointed; and, lest such a large power should be abused, no man was invested with it for longer than six months. But Sylla, who had terrified the people into a tame submission, and made himself absolute at Rome, would have it conferred on him for a time undetermined; so that the Romans, who had changed kingly government into the republican under consuls, and military tribunes, after many ages, relapsed again into the absolute power of one; though Sylla, to lessen the aversion which all republicans could not but have to such a form of government, took care to disguise what was in reality a royalty, under the less odious title of a \* *Dictatorship*.

between  
Cæsar and  
Pompey.

This success of Sylla's in climbing up to the empire, and supporting himself therein, made it apparent to those that came after him, that the Romans could bear a master, and gave occasion to the violent contests which afterwards happened between Cæsar and Pompey, who, after the death of Crassus †, and the Parthian war, were the two great competitors for the sovereignty of Rome.

Cneius

\* One thing is wonderful in this Sylla, that after he had destroyed more than an hundred thousand of his fellow-citizens in the civil war, and had caused ninety senators (of which fifteen had been consuls,) and more than six and twenty hundred knights, to be put to death, he had the courage to lay down the dictatorship, and to reduce himself to the level of a private citizen, without fearing the resentment of so many illustrious families, whose heads he had destroyed by his cruel proscriptions. The Romans in general looked upon this his abdication of the sovereign power, as an instance of the greatest magnanimity, and gladly forgave him all the murders, for the sake of the liberty which he thereby restored them; but his enemies imputed it to the natural uneasiness of his mind, and his continual fear, lest some Roman might be bold enough, at one stroke, to deprive him of both his empire and his life. However this be, it is certain, that, after having shed so much blood, he died peaceably in his bed, and a few days before his death, composed his own epitaph, which comprises his true character, viz. 'That no body had ever outdone him, either in obliging his friends, or persecuting his enemies;' *Vertot's Revolutions, lib. II.*

† When Crassus led his army into Mesopotamia, there came to him a certain chief of an Arabian tribe, who, having served in the wars under Pompey, had contracted an acquaintance with several of the Romans, and was therefore a proper instrument for Surenas, the Parthian general, to employ upon this occasion.



Cneius Pompeius (whose father, being of the same name, had been consul, and served his country faithfully in the wars) was, from his very youth, the darling of the Roman people; created a general, before he had been a soldier; and, through the whole course of his life, attended with a wonderful train of victories and successes: <sup>f</sup> But being all along accustomed to the command of armies, he could not so well, upon the expiration of his commission, reduce himself to the simplicity of a private life; and therefore, whenever he appeared in public, he was always followed by a crowd of his dependents, whose numerous appearance looked more like the court of some great prince, than the attendants of a citizen of any republic. It must be owned, however, that in his pursuit of dignities, he was less fond of the power that is inseparable from them, than of the honours and splendors that surround them; that, in short, he was a man of show, rather than real ambition; and, if he affected any high office in state, it was chiefly to raise himself above all the commanders of his time; for the great pride of his soul was, to be thought the only general of the commonwealth, whereas, he should have contented himself with being the first.

M. A.  
4001, &c.  
Ant. Chris.  
1, &c.  
aut. ær.  
Vulg. 3.  
from Jos.  
lib. 13.  
c. 19, to  
the end of  
lib. 15.  
Pompey's  
character.

## Caius

occasion. He told Crassus, enquiring about the strength of the enemy, that they were unable to stand before him, and that, to obtain a complete victory, he had nothing to do, but to march directly against them, for which purpose, he offered himself to be their guide. Crassus was weak enough to accept of his offer; and accordingly, the crafty men led them along the plains of Mesopotamia, until he had brought them into a sandy desert, where the Parthians, he knew, would have the best opportunity of destroying them, and then rode off to acquaint Surenas with it, who immediately fell upon them, and gave them a terrible defeat. Nor was this the only false step that Crassus made: For having rested the remains of his army for one day at Carrhæ, not far from the place where the battle was fought, when, in the night following, he endeavoured to make his escape, he committed himself to the guidance of one Andromachus, another traitor, who led him into the midst of bogs and morasses, where Surenas overtook him, slew him, and gave his army the greatest overthrow that the Romans had ever received since the battle of Cannæ; for, in this engagement, twenty thousand were slain, and ten thousand taken prisoners; and the rest forced to make their escape by several ways into Armenia, Cilicia, and Syria; *Plutarch, in Crasso; Appian, in Parthicus; and Dion Cassius, lib. 40.*

<sup>f</sup> Vertot's *Revolutions*, lib. 13.

A. M.  
4001. &c.  
Ant. Chris.  
1, &c.  
aut. Ær.  
Vulg. 3.  
from Jos.  
l. b. 13. c.  
19, to the  
end of  
lib. 15.

Caesar's  
character.

§ Caius Julius Cæsar was born of the illustrious family of the Julii, and was indeed the most extraordinary person of his age. Nature, which seemed to have formed him for the command of the rest of mankind, had given him an air of empire, and a dignity of aspect inexpressible; but then this air of grandeur was allayed by the gentleness and sweetness of his behaviour, which gained him the hearts of those he conversed with, and laid the foundation of his future greatness. He was a man of exalted courage, and insinuating eloquence, extensive in his designs, indefatigable in pursuing them, and ambitious of the great offices of state, chiefly for the increase of his interest and power, and for the means and opportunity which they afforded him, by gentle degrees, of becoming the master and sovereign of his country.

Upon the death of Crassus, who held the balance between these two great men, the emulation between them began to break out. Cæsar was in Gaul, pursuing his victories against the Helvetians, the Germans, the Belgæ, the Britons, and several other nations, and astonishing all the world with the fame of his great exploits; but Pompey, since the time of his victories in Asia, had continued (now for the space of twelve years) for the most part in Rome, notwithstanding he had obtained a large commission to govern the provinces of Spain and Africa.

By his constant residing at Rome he had got a perfect ascendant over the senate; and some, to remedy the disorders they then laboured under, were for creating him dictator, till Cato, who was always watchful for the public liberty, proposed rather to chuse him sole consul, without a colleague; because a consul was responsible to the people and senate for his conduct, which a dictator was not.

The senate approved of this expedient, and accordingly made Pompey the sole consul. They continued him likewise in his former governments, and, for the payment of the forces he had under him, gave him an annual allowance of a thousand talents out of the exchequer: But, as all good understanding between him and Cæsar was now vanished, he took care to prefer two laws, which the senate readily agreed to, *viz.* 'That the miscarriages of officers, for twenty years last past, should be enquired into; and that all absent persons should not be allowed to demand

‘demand any public employments;’ the latter of which was more immediately levelled at Cæsar : for Pompey’s design herein was, to oblige him to abandon the government of the two Gauls, and the command of his army, in order to come in person to solicit the consulate, which he in his turn (as he assigned by his letters) expected to have conferred on him.

A. M.  
4001, &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
1, &c.  
aut Ær.  
Vulg. 3.  
from Jos.  
lib 13 c.  
19. to the  
end of lib.  
15.

Cæsar was very well aware of Pompey’s design ; but, instead of relinquishing his government, and returning to Rome, he chose to remain at the head of his forces, and, when the senate (by Pompey’s procurement) came to a resolution of taking the government from him by naming his successor, he wrote several letters to them, with a great deal of temper, requesting either that they would continue him in his government, as they had done Pompey, or permit him, though absent from Rome, to put up for the consulate ; but the majority of the senate, that was entirely under Pompey’s direction, rejected every proposal that he sent ; so that finding himself treated with contempt, he passed the Alps at the head of the third legion, and halted at Ravenna, from whence he sent Fabius, one of his lieutenants, with letters to the senate, <sup>h</sup> ‘wherein he magnified his own exploits, expecting that some regard should be had to his services ; and wherein he declared his readiness to lay down his command, in case Pompey would do the like ; but that if that general pretended to retain his forces, he knew very well how to defend himself at the head of his legions, and would in a few days, be at Rome, to revenge the injuries which were done to him, as well as the public.’



This letter, when read to the senate, was represented as a kind of declaration of war, and accordingly procured a decree that Lucius Domitius should be Cæsar’s successor, and have four thousand new levies to enable him to go and take possession of his government ; and that in case Cæsar refused to disband his army within such a time, he should be prosecuted as an enemy to the commonwealth. When Cæsar was informed of this decree, he sent orders to such of his troops as were nearest at hand, to advance towards the Rubicon, a small river that parted his government of Gallia Cisalpina from the rest of Italy. When he came up the next day, he found there five thousand

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sand

<sup>h</sup> Vertot’s Revolutions, lib. 13.



A. M.  
4001, &c.  
Ant. Chris.  
1, &c.  
ant. A. r.  
Vulg. 3.  
from Jos.  
1 b. 13.  
c. 19. to  
the end of  
ib. 15.

1

stand foot, and three hundred horse; and having halted a while on the bank of the river, he is said there to have been seized with some remorse upon consideration of what he was about to do; till having reflected on the hatred and inveteracy of his enemies, he threw himself into the river at once, passed it, and took Ariminum by surprise; and from thence put all Rome in such a disorder, that Pompey, not having sufficient forces to resist him, with the consuls, and a great number of senators, retired to Capua, and thence to Brundisium, where taking shipping, they soon arrived at the port of Dyrrachium, a city of Epirus, where Pompey intended to gather together such an army as might enable him to make a stand.

Upon the retreat of Pompey, Cæsar, in the space of sixty days, made himself master of all Italy, and came to Rome, where he promised the people every thing should be done for the good of the commonwealth: And having filled up the senate, and settled some kind of government among them, he marched his army directly into Spain, where Pompey was governor, and had left several troops attached to his interest. As soon as he came thither, he fell upon Afranius and Petreius, Pompey's lieutenants; and having driven them out of the province, he made himself master thereof, and so returned to Rome, where he was declared dictator, though after eleven days, he laid down that office, and, together with Servilius Isauricus, was elected consul for the year ensuing.

Pompey, by this time, had been in Epirus for the space of a year, and had got together a considerable army out of Greece, Asia, and all the eastern countries, to support his interest; but when Cæsar went after him, the season of the year was too far advanced, either for the fleets to be at sea, or the armies to take the field, and so both sides lay still in their winter-quarters.

In the spring both armies took the field, and encamped against each other near Dyrrachium, (now Durazzo,) where, in several skirmishes, Cæsar had the better; but at length, in one of them he received so great a defeat, that himself acknowledged he must have been utterly undone, had Pompey seen his advantage, and pursued it. For fear of the like disaster, therefore, or the want of provisions for his army, Cæsar decamped the next day, and marched towards Thessaly, where he found plenty of all things, and there waited to give Pompey battle. Pompey had an army

of

of forty-five thousand foot, and five thousand horse, but they were most of them raw unexperienced men, raised out of the effeminate nations of Asia, and some Roman senators, and other gentlemen, who knew very little of war. Cæsar, on the other hand, had an army of twenty-two thousand foot, and one thousand horse; but then they were most part of them veteran soldiers, who, for the space of ten years, had been accustomed to war and victory in Gaul. On the plains of Pharsalia these two armies met with two of the greatest generals in the world at the head of them, disputing for universal empire. The engagement for some time was sharp on both sides: But, at length, Pompey's army was vanquished, and broken. Fifteen thousand of them were slain; four and twenty thousand made prisoners; their camp was taken, and their general, with much ado, forced to make his escape in disguise, and, after having wandered from place to place, was, at length, in Egypt, \* perfidiously slain in the fifty-ninth year of his age.

A. M.  
4001, &c.  
Ant. Chris.  
1, &c.  
act. 41.  
Vulg. 3.  
from Jos.  
lib. 15. c.  
9. to the  
end of lib.  
15.

After

\* After the defeat of his army, Pompey, not well knowing which way to betake himself, determined at last to go to Egypt. He had been a very considerable friend to the late king Ptolemy Auletes, and therefore he expected a kind reception from his son. Taking therefore his wife Cornelia, and his younger son Sextus with him, he steered his course towards Egypt, and, as he drew near to land, sent messengers to the king, desiring his protection, and aid in his present distress. The king was then a minor, under the tuition of Pothynus an eunuch, and Achilles the general of his army, who, taking Theodotus, and some others into the consultation; advised together what answer to send. Some were for receiving, and others for rejecting him; but Theodotus was of opinion, that their only safe way was to dispatch him: 'For should they receive him, as he argued, Cæsar would revenge it; should they reject him, if ever he recovered power, himself would revenge it; and therefore the only method to secure themselves from both, was to cut him off; for hereby they would certainly make Cæsar their friend, and prevent the other from doing any mischief; for dead men (said he, according to the proverb) never bite.' This advice prevailed, and accordingly Achilles, with Septimus a Roman commander, then in the service of the king of Egypt, was sent to put it in execution. Under the pretence therefore of conducting Pompey to the king, they took him out of the ship into a boat; but as soon as they came near the shore, they fell upon him, and slew him, cut off his head, and cast his dead carcase on the strand. His wife and son seeing this

A. M.  
4001, &c.  
Ant. Chris.  
1, &c.  
ant. Ær.  
Vulg. 3.  
from Jol.  
1st. 13.  
c. 19. to  
the end of  
lib. 15.

After the death of Pompey, and the return of Cæsar to Rome, the senate decreed him uncommon honours, and an unlimited authority. He was appointed consul for ten years, and perpetual dictator; had the name of *Imperator* given him, and the august title of *Father of his country*. His person was declared sacred and inviolable; and at all public games he had the privilege of sitting in a gilded chair, with a golden crown upon his head; but notwithstanding all this profusion of honours, we find in what a barbarous way he was murdered at last.

between  
Anthony  
and Augu-  
stus.

After the death of Julius Cæsar, great confusion and disorders happened in the Roman state, till at length, Anthony and Octavianus, upon the forced abdication of Lepidus, became the two great men in the empire. Anthony had all the east, and Octavianus all the west; but not content with this, they soon took occasion to differ with each other, and entered into contest who should have the whole.

Anthony's  
character.

Anthony was a person of great note for his military skill and abilities. At the battle of Pharsalia he did wonders: And in that of Philippi, (where Octavianus \* behaved but very meanly,) the whole victory was owing to his courage and conduct; But he was exceedingly addicted to vice, especially to the love of women, which Cleopatra observing, laid hold on him on this weak side, and for the gratification of her ambition and avarice, (which

this barbarous murder, raised bitter cries and lamentations: but all to no purpose: Perceiving therefore themselves in the like danger, they hoisted sail and made off, leaving this great man (who, in the fifty-ninth year of his age, came to this woful end) no other funeral, than what Philip, an enfranchised bondman of his, and a poor Roman, who came thither by accident, could give him, by making a funeral pile of the broken pieces of an old boat, that lay wrecked on the shore; *Plutarch, in Pompeio*; and *Appian, De bellis civilibus, lib. 2.*

\* On the eve before the battle at Philippi, under pretence of some indisposition, he left the body, which he commanded, and, while the two armies were engaged, hid himself amongst the baggage; and, in a sea fight against young Pompey, he had not the courage to see the two fleets engage, but lay in the bottom of the ship, with his eyes lift up to heaven, as if he had been in a trance, and never once shewed himself to his soldiers, until news was brought him, the enemy was fled; *Verot's Revolutions of Rome, lib. 14.*



(which were the two predominant passions in her,) put him upon such measures, as gave a general offence to the Romans.

Octavianus, on the other hand, though he was always successful, yet for this he was indebted not so much to his courage, as his cunning and management; for, though he had a genius capable of framing the greatest projects, yet, in cool blood, he found himself incapable of facing the meanest danger. And therefore being conscious of his weakness in this respect, he contented himself with supplying the schemes, and called in the valour of other men to put them in execution. In most of his military undertakings, he borrowed (as it were) Agrippa's courage, and the rather made use of him, because he was a mere soldier of fortune, and, consequently, incapable of creating any jealousy, or making himself head of any party.

After \* a vast preparation for war, these two great men, of different characters, met their armies and fleets near Actium, a town on the coast of Epirus, there to decide the empire of the world. Canidius who had the chief command of Anthony's army, persuaded him to decamp, and march into the country of Thrace, or Macedon, there to try his fortune in a battle at land, because his army was much more to be depended on than his fleet: But Cleopatra, who was then in company with Anthony, advised him rather to decide the matter by a fight at sea; and her advice prevailed.

On the second of September, therefore, A. M. 3973, Ant. Christ. 31. the two fleets engaged before the mouth of the Ambrasian gulph, in the sight of the two armies, the one drawn up on the north, and the other on the south, side of the streights which entered the gulph, there to attend the event of the battle. The fight, for some time, continued dubious, with as fair a prospect of success for Anthony, as for his adversary, until Cleopatra forsook him: For she, being affrightened with the noise and terror of the battle, gave orders to the captain that commanded her ship, to sheer off, and so drew after her the whole Egyptian squadron, which consisted of sixty large men of war.

\* Anthony's forces, at land and sea, consisted of an hundred thousand foot, twelve thousand horse, and five hundred ships of war; and Octavianus's of eighty thousand foot, twelve thousand horse, and two hundred and fifty ships of war; *Plutarch, in Antonio*; and *Dion. Cassus, lib. 80.*

A. M.  
4001, &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
1, &c.  
aut Æt.  
Vulg. 3.  
from Jos.  
lib. 13.  
c. 19. to  
the end of  
lib. 15.  
Augustus's  
character.

A. M.  
4007, &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
1, &c.  
ant. ær.  
Volg. 3.  
from Jos.  
lib. 13.  
c. 19, to  
the end of  
lib. 15.

Anthony, giving all for lost, made after her as fast as he could, and so, by his flight, yielded the victory to Octavianus; but after he was gone, his ships fought so valiantly, that though the engagement began at noon, it was not ended till it was night.

In the mean time, Anthony and Cleopatra got to Tene-ros in Laconia, whither some of his ships, that had escaped the fight, and several of his friends, repaired to him, from whom we understood, that though his fleet was destroyed, his land-army was still safe; and therefore he wrote to Canidius to retire with it through Macedonia into Asia, in hopes of being able, by that mean, to renew the war: But Canidius, in his march, being overtaken by Octavianus, fled by night to Anthony, and the army, finding themselves deserted by their generals, went over to the enemy, as the foreign forces, which had come to the assistance of Anthony, fled all home to their respective countries, and made their peace afterwards with the conqueror on the best terms they could.

By this time Anthony and Cleopatra were both returned to Alexandria, and it was not long before Octavianus went in pursuit of them. On their first coming, Anthony fell upon the Roman troops, while under the fatigue of their march, and put them to a total rout; but, in a second engagement with them, he was vanquished, and driven back into the city with great loss. The next morning, when he went down to the harbour to put the fleet in order to engage the enemy, no sooner were they drawn up in line of battle, but he saw them desert, and go over to them, and, (to his great mortification,) when he returned to the city, he found that all the land-forces, both horse and foot, had in like manner revolted from him.

When Anthony understood that all this was done by Cleopatra's treachery, and in hopes of making her peace with Octavianus, he could not forbear expressing his resentment of it in loud complaints; so that Cleopatra, for fear of him, but (as she pretended) to secure herself from the enemy, fled to a mounment, which she caused to be built of a great height, and wonderful structure, and having there shut herself up with two maids, and one eunuch, she had it given out, that she was dead. Anthony no sooner heard the news, but, supposing it to be true, fell upon his sword; however, having intelligence, some time after, that Cleopatra was still alive, he ordered those

about

about him to carry him to her monument, where might be seen one of the most deplorable spectacles that can be imagined. Anthony, all over bloody, and breathing out his last, was, by the hands of Cleopatra and her two maids, drawn up by the ropes and pulleys that were employed in the building, to the top of the monument, and there, in a few moments, expired in her arms.

A. M.  
4091, &c.  
Ant. chris.  
1, &c.  
aur. Ær.  
Vulg. 3.  
from Jos.  
lib. 13.  
c. 19, to  
the end of  
lib. 15

After the death of Anthony, the great care of Octavianus was to make himself master of Cleopatra's person and riches; of her person, to adorn his triumph; and of her riches to defray the expences of the war: But, after he had luckily compassed both, she, having private notice given her of her being designed to be carried to Rome, to make part of the show in her conqueror's triumph, caused herself \* to be bitten with an asp, and so, to avoid this infamy †, died, after she had reigned, from the death of her father, twenty-two years, and lived thirty-nine.

Octavianus, i though much concerned for having thus

\* The asp is a serpent of Egypt and Libya, and proper only to those climates. Those that are bitten by it, die within three hours, in a kind of gentle sleep or lethargy, without any sensation of pain; and therefore Cleopatra, who had experienced all kinds of poisons upon other creatures, made choice of this, as the easiest way of dying; and, to deceive her keepers, kept an asp always hid in her chamber, under figs, grapes, and flowers, which, when she was determined to die, she took and held to her arm, and, soon after its biting her, fell into a sleep, and so died.

Ausa et jacentem visere regiam  
Vultu sereno fortis, et asperas  
Tractare serpentes, ut atrum  
Corpore combiberet venenum.

Deliberata morte ferocior:  
Sævis Liburnis scilicet invidens,  
Privata deduci superbo  
Non humilis mulier triumpho.

HOR. Carm. lib. 1. Ode 37.

† In her death, ended the reign of the family of the Ptolemies in Egypt, which hereupon was reduced into the form of a Roman province, and was governed by a Prefect sent thither from Rome. Under this form, it continued a province of the Roman empire six hundred and seventy years, till it was taken from them by the Saracens, in the year of our Lord 641; *Prideaux's Connection, anno 30.*

i Dion Cassius, lib. 51.; and Suetonius, in Octavio.  
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A. M.  
4001, &c.  
Ant. Chrif.  
1, &c.  
aut. Ær.  
Vulg. 3.  
from Jof.  
lib. 13. c.  
19 to the  
end of lib.  
15.

thus loft the chief glory of his triumph, did nevertheless make for Cleopatra (as he had permitted her to make for Anthony) a fplendid and royal funeral. He had them both repositied in the fame monument which they had begun, and gave orders to have it finished. Having thus fettled his affairs in Egypt, and cut off all thofe from whom he might expect any freſh diſturbances, he made a review of the ſeveral provinces of the Leſſer Aſia, and the iſles adjoining, and ſo paſſing through Greece, returned to Rome, where he triumphed for three days ſucceſſively, for his victory over the Dalmatians, and for the ſea-fight at Actium, and for the conqueſt of Egypt; in the laſt of which, were led before him the children of Cleopatra, and though herſelf had eſcaped that fate, her effigy was carried in proceſſion, with an aſp hanging at her arm, to denote the manner of her death.

He is made  
ſole empe-  
ror and  
pontifex  
maximus,

After this triumph, he held a private conſultation with Agrippa and Mecænas, (his two chief miniſters, and principal inſtruments of his greatneſs,) whether he ſhould reſtore the commonwealth to its antient ſtate, or retain the ſovereign power. Agrippa was for the reſtoring, but Mecænas for the retaining part; whereupon Octavianus, knowing that the ſenate was filled with his creatures, whoſe fortunes depended on his holding the ſovereignty, propoſed indeed, in a formal ſpeech, to reſign his authority; but, no ſooner was the propoſal made, than the whole ſenate, with an unanimous voice, diſſuaded him from it, and, with all manner of arguments, preſſed him to take upon him the ſole adminiſtration of the government, which, with much ſeeming reluctance, at length he conſented to. But, by no means would he ſubmit to accept of it for a longer term than ten years, though, from ten years to ten years, upon one pretence or other, he continued himſelf in it as long as he lived, and ſo tranſmitted it to his ſucceſſors.

With this new power, the ſenate was determined to confer on him a new name. Himſelf had taken upon him the common title of *Imperator*, which the ſoldiers, during the times of the republic, uſed to give to victorious generals; but this was not thought adequate to his merit: And therefore, ſince the word *Auguſtus* ſeemed to ſignify ſomething that, above human, was ſacred and venerable, this was made choice of, and, by the general ſuffrage of the ſenate, firſt given to him, with many more things decreed to his honour, by the flattery of ſome, who court-  
ed

ed his favour, and the fear of others, who dreaded his power.

Augustus (for so we must now call him) having raised himself to this height of power and glory, as soon as Lepidus \*, who had been pontifex maximus, or high-priest of Rome, was dead, assumed to himself (as did his successors in the empire) that office; and the first thing he did, was to examine into the prophetic books, which at that time went abroad under the name of the *Sibyls* †.

That in the reign of Tarquinius Superbus, there came a strange woman to Rome, who offered to sell to the king nine volumes of these Sibylline oracles, but, upon his refusing

E c 2

\* This Lepidus was one of the triumvirate with Octavianus and Anthony, but a man of no manner of merit. He joined Octavianus, in carrying on the war against Sextus Pompeius, the son of Pompey the Great; but when he arrogated the whole honour of their successes to himself, Octavianus drew over all his army to desert him, and so reduced him to the necessity of begging his life, and of being content to lead the remainder of it in a private and mean condition, at Circetii, a small maritime town among the Latins, where he was sent into banishment, and there died in obscurity and contempt; *Suetonius, in Octavio, lib. 16.; Appian, De bellis civilibus, lib. 5.; L. Florus, and lib. 4. c. 8.*

† The Sibyls were women, of ancient times said to be endued with a prophetic spirit, and to have delivered oracles, fore-shewing the fates and destinies of kingdoms. We have, in the writings of the ancients, mention made of ten of them: The Cumæan, the Cumanian, the Persian, the Hellespontican, the Lybian, the Samian, the Delphian, the Phrygian, the Tiburtine, and the Erythræan: But some are of opinion, that the Cumæan and the Erythræan was one and the same Sibyl; that she was born at Erythræ in Ionia, and therefore was by the Greeks call'd Erythræ; but, having removed from Erythræ to Cumæ in Italy, and there delivered all her oracles, she was from thence, by the Romans and Italians, called *Cumæa*. These Sibylis, among the the Pagans, were what the prophets and prophetesses were accounted among the Hebrews; and, as the most ancient of these were nam'd *Sibylla*, so all others of the same sex, who pretended to the like faidical spirit, were called *Sibyls*. The place from whence these Sibyls gave out their oracles, was generally a cave, or subterraneous vault, if we may judge of others by that at Cumæ,) whereof Justin Martyr gives us this account. 'I have seen the place,' says he, 'which is a large chapel, or oratory, hewn out of the main rock, and must have been a work of great labour. Here the Sibyl (as the inhabitants,

A. M.  
4001, &c.  
Ant, Christ.  
1, &c.  
Aut Ær.  
Vulg. 3.  
from Jos.  
lib. 13.  
c. 19. to  
the end of  
lib. 15.  
An account  
of the Si-  
bylline o-  
racles, and  
to their vali-  
dity.

A. M.  
4001, &c.  
Ant. Chris  
t, &c.  
ant. Ær.  
Vulg. 3.  
from Jos.  
lib. 13.  
c. 19. to  
the end of  
lib. 15.

to purchase them, burnt three of them, and afterwards coming with six, and being rejected, burnt three more, and yet, at last, obtained the full price of what she had asked at first, for the three remaining: That these volumes, when purchased, <sup>k</sup> were laid up in the Capitol, committed to the custody of proper officers, never consulted but upon great exigencies of state, and carefully preserved, until, at the burning of the Capitol, in the civil wars between Sylla and Marius, they happened to be consumed: That, upon the rebuilding of the Capitol, <sup>l</sup> the Romans, with great care, made another collection of Sibylline oracles from several countries, and, after they had selected such as their church and state did approve of for their purpose, laid them up in the new Capitol, instead of those which the fire had consumed; that, besides those Capitoline volumes, there were a great many more Sibylline oracles in the world, <sup>m</sup> which Augustus, in the beginning of his office of pontifex maximus, endeavoured to collect; and what he reputed genuine, or rather what suited his purpose best, these he deposited likewise in the Capitol, burning the rest: That <sup>n</sup> Tiberius made another review of these oracles, and condemned several volumes of them to the flames; but the Capitoline copies were still held in great veneration, <sup>o</sup> until they fell into disgrace in the reign of Honorius, and, by his order and appointment, were burnt and destroyed; <sup>p</sup> these are facts that are confirmed by all antiquity, and what comprise indeed the whole history of these Sibylline writings. But if they were all  
thus

‘habitants, who had a tradition thereof, told me) gave forth  
‘oracles. In the middle of the chapel, they shewed me three  
‘hollow places, hewn out of the same rock, in which, when  
‘filled with water, the Sibyl used to bathe herself, and so, hav-  
‘ing put on her garment retired into the innermost cell of the  
‘chapel, (which was likewise hewn out of the same rock.) and,  
‘having placed herself upon an elevated seat, which jutted  
‘out into the middle of the cell, she there uttered her oracles;’  
*Lactantius, De falsa religione, lib. 1. c. 6.; Salmasius in exercitatio.*  
*ad Solinum, p. 8.; et J. Martyr, Cohortatio ad Græcos.*

<sup>k</sup> Dionys. Halicar. lib. 4.; Pliny’s Nat. hist. lib. 23.; Solin.  
Polyhist. lib. 2.; and Aul. Gel. lib. 1. c. 19. <sup>l</sup> Tully De divi-  
nat. lib. 1.; Dionys. Halicar.; and Aul. Gel. ubi supra. <sup>m</sup>  
Lactan. De falsa religione, lib. 6. et De ira Dei, c. 22. <sup>n</sup> Sue-  
ton in Octavio. <sup>o</sup> Dion. Cassius, lib. 57.; Tacit. Annal. lib. 6.  
<sup>p</sup> Aug. De civit. Dei, lib. 18, c. 53. 54.



thus finally destroyed, the question is, how came we by the present collection of Greek verses, comprised in eight books, which go under the name of *Sibyls*, and of what merit and authority are we to account them?

Now, in answer to this, it is to be observed, <sup>a</sup> that, long before the times of Christianity, there were extant, among the Heathens, several oracles, or predictions of future events, ascribed to one or more of these prophetesses, who were stiled *Sibyls*; that these predictions were held in great esteem among the ancients, as containing notions consonant to true religion, the worship of one God, the conflagration of the world, the renovation of it again, the general resurrection, and the rewards and punishments hereafter; and that both Heathen, Jewish, and Christian authors, who make mention of these Sybils give a strong sanction to their authority. Varro looks upon them as inspired prophetesses; Virgil does them honour in citing their predictions; Josephus thinks them useful to establish some positions in sacred history; and Clemens Alexandrinus (as he quotes a more ancient author for it) brings in St Paul addressing himself to an Heathen audience in these words: 'Take the Greek books in your hands, read the *Sibyls*, and see what they say of the unity of God, and how they foretel what is to come, and you will there clearly find the Son of God.' It must be acknowledged, indeed, that the whole collection of these Sibylline oracles, as they are now extant, in eight entire books, is far from being genuine. The 1st, 2d, and most of the 5th, all the 6th, 7th, and 8th books, seem to be a manifest forgery, the spurious production of some zealous Christian, (perhaps about the middle of the second age after Christ,) for the promotion of the religion he professed.

<sup>r</sup> In one place, he explicitly declares himself to be a Christian, and speaks of the whole mystery of our salvation, and of the methods whereby it was accomplished; of the incarnation and birth, the circumcision and death, the resurrection and ascension of our Saviour Christ, with as much accuracy as do the evangelists. <sup>s</sup> In another place, he mentions Christ's future reigning here upon earth, according to the notion of the millenarians.

<sup>a</sup> Whiston's Vindication of the Sibylline oracles,

<sup>r</sup> Lib. 8.

<sup>s</sup> Lib. 2.

A. M.  
4001, &c.  
Ant. Chris.  
1, &c.  
aut. Ær.  
Vulg 3.  
from Jos.  
lib. 13.  
c. 19, 10  
the end of  
lib. 15.

A. M.  
4001, &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
1, &c.  
ant. Chr.  
Vulgar.  
from Jos.  
lib. 13. c.  
19. to the  
end of 1 b.  
15.

ans, which was not started till the second century; and, in another, gives us a succession of the Roman emperors, in their order, from Julius Cæsar to Antoninus Pius, together with the adoption of Marcus Aurelius, and Lucius Verus, which has much more the air of an historical narrative, than a prophetic prediction.

These things discover a forgery (at least a great part of these pretended oracles, a little too palpably; but then, it must be observed, that neither the Heathens before, nor the Christians, for the three first centuries after Christ, knew any thing of these spurious pieces, because we nowhere find them making any citations from them; but now, <sup>u</sup> from the whole proem, the greatest part of the third, all the fourth, and a small branch of the fifth book, (which are the only parts of the present collection, that are either cited or referred to by the ancient Heathens,) their quotations are innumerable: And therefore we may justly infer, that the present copy of eight books is not the same with what was extant before, and in the first ages of Christianity, but widely different from it; that those are the genuine prophecies only, which we find the ancient Heathens, and primitive Christians, so frequently citing, and so generally esteeming, upon the account of their divine inspiration; and that the rest which have visible marks of forgery upon them, were probably the spurious additions of such conceited Christians as called themselves *Gnostics*; because Epiphanius tells us, that this set of men boasted of having books, written by the daughter of Noah, even as the pretended prophets, at the end of the third book, (which is a spurious addition to what went before,) gives us to know, that she was a wife to one of the three sons of Noah, and was with him in the ark during the whole time of the deluge.

Upon the whole, therefore, we may conclude, that tho', in the collection, which we now have of the Sibylline prophecies, several whole books, and some parts in others, are confessedly spurious, yet others there are, which have all the evidences we can desire, of their being genuine: And therefore to condemn them all in the lump, and, because some appear to be palpable forgeries, to include all under the same category, is an act of great injustice.

If indeed we attend never so little to the contents of these oracles, which we deem genuine, we cannot but perceive,

<sup>r</sup> Lib. 5.

<sup>u</sup> Ibid.

ceive, that neither Heathens, Jews, or Christians, could consistently with themselves, be any ways the forgers of them. \* The Heathens could not, because they are directly levelled against their wickedness, idolatry, and Polytheism. The Jews could not, because they foretel the subversion of their state and temple by the Romans, which we all know they would never believe: And the Christians could not, because many quotations, out of these oracles, are found in other authors previous to Christianity; and in the beginning of it, several of them are cited by the first Christians, in the open view of all men, as very ancient at that time, very well known, and universally received over all the Heathen world.

If then these genuine prophecies of the Sibyls were not of human contrivance and invention, the conclusive question is, From whence was it that they derived their original? God, no doubt, who forced Balaam, contrary to his will, to bless the Israelites, and to prophecy *the coming of his Son out of Jacob*, could, in what manner he pleased, controul the diabolical spirits, which presided in the Heathen oracles, and make them utter things, even relating to the kingdom of the Messias, which otherwise they might have no inclination to utter. But there is no necessity for our having recourse to this extraordinary expedient; since the contents of the Sibylline oracles (those I mean that are genuine) are every where agreeable to the scriptures, and foretel, for the main part, the same great revolutions of providence, that they do; it is no way inconsistent with the divine attributes to suppose, that, tho' God gave positive laws, or an institution of religious worship to the Jews only, and intrusted none but them with those divine oracles, which related to that worship; yet he might not wholly confine divine inspiration to that nation, but might support the law and religion of nature, and the right worship of himself, as the one true God, among the Heathens likewise, by the help of these oracles, until *the day dawned, i. e. a more perfect revelation came, and he who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, gave the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of JESUS CHRIST.*

\* Whiston's Vindication of the Sibylline oracles. <sup>1</sup> Num. xxiv. 5. &c. <sup>2</sup> 2 Cor. iv. 6.





A  
NEW HISTORY  
OF THE  
NEW TESTAMENT  
Of our LORD and SAVIOUR  
JESUS CHRIST,  
From his BIRTH,  
TO THE  
ESTABLISHMENT OF CHRISTIANITY.  
WITH  
ANSWERS TO MOST OF THE CONTROVERTED QUESTIONS;  
DISSERTATIONS UPON THE MOST REMARKABLE  
PASSAGES, AND A CONNECTION OF PROFANE  
HISTORY ALL ALONG.

To which are added,

NOTES, EXPLAINING DIFFICULT TEXTS, RECTIFYING MIS-  
TRANSLATIONS, AND RECONCILING SEEMING  
CONTRADICTIONS.

The whole illustrated with proper MAPS, &c.

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BY THE REV. THOMAS STACKHOUSE, A. M.  
LATE VICAR OF BEENHAM IN BERKSHIRE.

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THE  
A P P A R A T U S  
TO THE  
H I S T O R Y  
OF THE  
NEW TESTAMENT.

**B**EFORE we enter upon an examination of matters relating to the Christian revelation, it may not be improper to enquire a little, how the dispensation of Moses, which certainly was sent from God, and confirmed by miracles, came to be superseded by this latter institution of Christ; since this is one of the greatest prejudices which the Jews have conceived, and have reason, as they think, to urge against the divine authority of our religion, that has obtruded itself upon the world, and unjustly taken place of theirs, which, according to the divine ordination, (as they maintain,) was to endure for ever.

<sup>a</sup> *An everlasting covenant*, and <sup>b</sup> *a statute*, or <sup>c</sup> *ordinance for ever*, are so common appellations, say they, of our law, and the several branches of it, that we cannot but think, had God at any time intended a repeal, he would have given us previous notice of it, and signified his will to that purpose, in some express texts of scripture: But since, in the whole compais of our sacred books, we meet with no such thing, but, on the contrary, very frequent declarations of the perpetual and immutable obligation of the dispensation we are under we account ourselves safe in adhering to Moses, and cannot but look upon Jesus as one of those false prophets, <sup>d</sup> *who would thrust us out of the way, which the Lord our God has commanded us to walk in*, <sup>e</sup> *God is not a man that he should lie, neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? Or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?* And therefore <sup>f</sup> to suppose, that he has

An objection, viz. That the laws of Moses is immutable.

F f 2

<sup>g</sup> *retracted*

<sup>a</sup> Gen. xvii. 7.      <sup>b</sup> Levit. xxiii. 14.      <sup>c</sup> Exod. xii. 14.  
<sup>d</sup> Deut. xiii. 5.      <sup>e</sup> Numb. xxiii. 19.      <sup>f</sup> Stanhope's Sermons at Boyle's lectures.

‘retracted his former, and substituted a new, revelation,  
 ‘is to argue him guilty, either of such levity in the new,  
 ‘or such weakness in the old establishment, as cannot, with-  
 ‘out the greatest degree of ignorance or impiety, be im-  
 ‘puted to an all-wise, consequently an unchangeable being.’

Now, in order to satisfy this objection, <sup>8</sup> we must observe, that the laws given to the Jews were of several kinds, viz, moral, ceremonial, and judicial. The moral, which considered them as men, contained their duty to God, their neighbour, and themselves: The ceremonial, which considered them as a church, regarded their purifications, their sacrifices, and other rites of religious worship; and the judicial, which considered them as a commonwealth, had respect to their conduct, and different conditions in life; to damages, punishments, and other civil matters.

Answered,  
 by shewing  
 the different  
 kinds of  
 the Jewish  
 law.

\* Now, in relation to each of these we assert, — That the moral precepts of their law are so far from being repealed, that they are enforced, and exalted by the Christian rule of manners; that the ceremonial, which were never prescribed as matters of intrinsic goodness, but only as figures of things then to come, which, since their institution, are come, were not so properly cast off as worn out; and that the judicial, which were peculiar to their country and nation only, after the dissolution of their state and government, ceased of course; and that God consequently, in this whole affair, can be chargeable with no variableness nor shadow of turning.

Whether

<sup>8</sup> Kidder’s Demonstration of the Messiah, part 3 c. 1.

\* I lay no great stress on what may be observed of the different manners of delivering the three laws, moral, ceremonial, and judicial, but only let it be an occasion to suggest to us a right notion concerning the different nature of them. The ten commandments or moral law, was delivered on the top of the mount, and, in the face of the whole world, as it were, to signify, that it was of universal influence, and obliged all mankind: But the ceremonial was received by Moses in private, in the tabernacle; which may suggest to us, that it was of a peculiar concern, that belongeth to the Jews only, and was to cease, when the tabernacle was down and when the veil of the temple was rent. And as to the judicial law, it was neither so publicly and audibly given as the moral law, nor yet so privately as the ceremonial; thereby to intimate, that this kind of law is of an indifferent nature, and either may be observed or not observed, according as its rules suit with the place and government under which we live; *Edward’s Survey of Religion, part 2. c. 14,*

Whether our blessed Saviour made any material addition to the moral law, as delivered by Moses; whether the rules he left us for governing <sup>h</sup> our passions, for suppressing <sup>i</sup> the first motions of unclean desires, for <sup>k</sup> forgiving injuries, and for enlarging the object <sup>l</sup> of our charity, by loving even strangers, even enemies, and doing good to all mankind; whether the commands so often repeated of forsaking all, and laying down our very lives for the sake of the truth, together with a restraint from such liberties, as were allowed by the Jews, in regard to polygamy and divorce; whether these, and some other precepts of the like nature, are not entirely new and peculiar to the gospel, or deduceable all (as the Jews contend) from the general command of *loving God with all the heart, and our neighbour as ourselves*, we shall not stay here to determine. This, we imagine, all will allow; that the excellence of a law, considered as a law, does not only consist in the subject-matter of the duties enjoined by it, but, proportionably, in all those other qualifications which contribute to the attainment of its proper end. Now, since the end of every law is the regulation of manners, by promoting the practice of the virtues which it requires, and suppressing the vices which it prohibits, it must necessarily follow, that every law must be more or less perfect, according as the plainness or obscurity of its precepts, or the weight or weakness of its sanctions appear to be.

<sup>m</sup> Since then the moral law, under the gospel-state, has explained men's duty more fully; and (if not extended it farther) expressed it in its just and utmost extent; since it has cut off all evasions from pretended ignorance, in many degrees of goodness and cases of great importance, which neither the common people, nor even the teachers of the Jews held themselves obliged to before; since it engages our utmost diligence by express promises of eternal life, for which the law did no where positively covenant, but only for prosperity, and health, and the promised land; since it restrains the sinner by threatenings of certain and eternal vengeance, where the law denounced only temporal sufferings, affliction, and captivity, diseases, and bodily death; since the gospel-dispensation, I say, is an over-balance for all we can do or endure to attain it, and the

<sup>h</sup> Matth. v. 22.      <sup>i</sup> Ibid. ver. 28, 29, 30.      <sup>k</sup> Ibid. ver. 39, 40.      <sup>l</sup> Ibid. ver. 44.: and Luke x. 29, 37.      <sup>m</sup> Stanhope's Sermons at Boyle's lectures.

The moral law confirmed, and perfected by Christ.



the gospel-penalty such, as no pleasure, or present profit, can make us an amends for incurring; whereas the law (supposing it requires all that the gospel requires) does not propose a valuable consideration for the duties it enjoins, it cannot, I think, be denied but that the moral part of religion is exalted by the doctrine of JESUS CHRIST; and that, either by adding to the matter of it, or, at least, by adding to the clearness and strength, the efficacy and obligation of it, our Saviour hath left it a more perfect rule and motive to obedience, than he found it at his coming.

That God  
all along  
expressed  
contempt  
for the ri-  
tual law.

Long before his coming indeed, God, by the mouth of his prophets, had expressed a contempt of all ritual services, if they were not attended with moral virtue; that he <sup>a</sup> *desired mercy, and not sacrifice, and the knowledge of God, more than burnt-offerings*; that he was not pleased <sup>o</sup> *with thousands of rams, nor ten thousand of rivers of oil*; that <sup>p</sup> *incense was an abomination to him, the new moons and Sabbaths, and calling of assemblies, he could not away with*, and therefore he says, <sup>q</sup> *I spake not to your fathers, nor commanded them concerning burnt offerings and sacrifices; but these things I commanded them, saying, Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people*. Now, it is certain, that at this time these things were part of divine worship, and that, on the very day when the Israelites departed out of Egypt, God instituted the Paschal sacrifice; and therefore we cannot imagine what should be the reason of his rejecting them, unless they were such *precepts* (as he tells them) <sup>r</sup> *that were not good i. e. had no intrinsic goodness in them, and judgments whereby they should not live*; designed indeed for types of some things future, but never to be of perpetual and unalterable continuance in religion.

which was  
altogether  
typical;

And indeed, if we look into the nature of sacrifices in particular, we shall scarce be able to give a sufficient reason why, in the first ages of the world, and immediately after the fall, beasts should be slain in the worship of God, before they were used in food; why God should accept the blood of any creature, or be pleased with taking away the life which he had given it; or why a peculiar efficacy, towards the expiation of sin, should be supposed to reside in the blood, more than any other part, unless it had been upon account of the blood of Christ, which was typically prefigured by the blood of beasts. Unless, I say, we are  
pre-

<sup>a</sup> Hosea vi. 6.

<sup>q</sup> Jer. vii. 22. 23.

<sup>o</sup> Micah vi. 7.

<sup>r</sup> Ezek. xx. 25.

<sup>p</sup> Isaiah i. 13.

prepossed of this truth, that the sacrifices of the ancient law were prefigurative of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, <sup>s</sup> we can look upon the tabernacle and temple of Jerusalem as no better than so many slaughter-houses; and the blood, and fat, and continual burning of flesh, would be a means to incite our disgust rather than our devotion. Such sacrifices as these (as the apostle justly argues) <sup>t</sup> *could never be able to make him, that did the service, perfect, as pertaining to the conscience*; and therefore he concludes, that the tabernacle was a figure for the time then present, and that the ritual services then imposed were limited to a certain period, which he calls the *times of reformation*; i. e. they were to endure only so long as till matters could conveniently be ordered better, and the condition of things would allow a more spiritual worship to be established in their stead.

Pursuant <sup>u</sup> to this, the opinion of some considerable Jewish writers is, that God would give a new law by the hand of the Messiah; that the ceremonial should last no longer than his advent; that then it should be lawful for them to eat swine's flesh; and *that, in time to come, all oblations should cease, except the sacrifice of praise*; And therefore we may justly wonder, how they came to overlook that plain prediction of the prophet Jeremiah, <sup>x</sup> *Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant, which I made with their fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; but this shall be the covenant, that I will make with them, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people*: From whence the <sup>y</sup> apostle infers, that the mention of a new covenant implies the first to be old, and liable to the fate of every thing that is so, which is, to be decaying, and ready to disappear.

Nothing, I think, can be plainer in Scripture, than the calling of the Gentiles into the bosom of God's church, when, according to the sacred phrase, <sup>z</sup> *his mountain shall be established in the top of the mountains, and all nations should flow thither*; and when <sup>a</sup> *pure incense should be offered in every place, and his name become great among the Heathens, from the rising of the sun, until the going down of the same*. But now, <sup>and to be repealed upon the coming in of the Gentiles.</sup>  
how

<sup>s</sup> Lamy's Introduction. <sup>t</sup> Heb. ix. 9 10. <sup>u</sup> Kidder's Demonstration, part 3. c. 1. <sup>x</sup> Chap xxxi. 31, &c. <sup>y</sup> Heb. viii. 8. 13. <sup>z</sup> Isaiah ii. 2. <sup>a</sup> Mal. i. 11.

how could this possibly come to pass, so long as the Levitical law subsisted? it was impossible for the Gentiles to come, three times every year, from the utmost parts of the world to Jerusalem, as the Jews were required to do; nor could there be any sense in their celebrating the Passover, and other festivals, in remembrance of a deliverance from Egypt, and other momentous events, when neither they nor their ancestors had any concern in them. These were the things which distinguished Israel, as God's peculiar people, and this was <sup>b</sup> the partition-wall, which was to be broken down, whenever the prophecies, which declared that the Jew and Gentile should both be made one, should receive their accomplishment.

The truth is, <sup>c</sup> the judicial and ceremonial laws of Moses are like the municipal laws of any particular city, which are no longer in force, when once the prince or lawgiver has declared his intention to govern all his subjects, in all parts of his dominions, by one and the same law: And that the destruction of the city and temple of the Jews, and the miserable dispersion of that people (which made it impossible for them to perform the precepts that were required of them,) was to all intents and purposes, such a declaration, no one can doubt, who considers, that the providence of God, in such cases, is the interpreter of his written word, and that he cannot more plainly signify the repeal of any precept, and the release of all obligation to it, than by rendering the discharge of it absolutely impracticable.

Upon the whole, then, it appears, that God gave the Jews plain and sufficient warning, before he made any change in the institution of Moses; that, in making this change he acted the part of a wise prince, who accommodates his laws to the circumstances of his subjects; that, in the moral law he made no alteration, only the addition of stronger sanctions; that the ceremonial law he quite <sup>d</sup> *disannulled, because of the weakness, and unprofitableness thereof*; that the political law of course expired, after the destruction of the Jewish state and polity: and that therefore, when any laws of these latter sort are said to be appointed for ever, <sup>e</sup> the phrase *for ever* must imply <sup>f</sup>

as

<sup>b</sup> Eph. ii. 14., 15. <sup>z</sup> Kidder's Demonstration, part 3. c. 1.

<sup>d</sup> Heb. vii. 18. <sup>c</sup> Cave's Apparatus to the lives of the Apostles. <sup>f</sup> Vid. Lev. iii. 17 —xvi. 31.—xxiii. 14.—xxiv. 3: Numb. x. 8.—xv. —xviii. 8. &c.



(as it often does) no more, than a periodical duration \*, limited according to the nature of the thing, and the will of the law giver.

§ The Jews indeed are strictly required, not to add to the word which God commanded them, nor to diminish aught from it; but, though they were forbidden to do this, yet God himself was not bound by the prohibition. Their law stood upon divine authority, and was revealed by God; but it does not therefore follow, that the same authority which set it up, could not take it away. He nowhere tells us that this was his last revelation, or that he intended that we should take it as such; on the contrary, he expressly declares, that he would <sup>h</sup> make a new covenant, and that not according to the covenant which he had formerly made; and therefore, as it is no disparagement either to the goodness or wisdom, or immutability of God, to say, that the heavens and the earth, which he hath now framed, shall at a certain time, <sup>i</sup> be dissolved, <sup>k</sup> and pass away, and in their place a new heaven, and a new earth, much

Without  
any reflection  
upon  
God.

\* It is certain, and confessed among the Jews, that the word *Olam*, which we render by *ever*, does not always signify *eternity*, but a limited and determinate time. Thus much Joseph also confesses and produces several instances for the proof it. To this purpose it is said of the servant, that he should serve *his master for ever*. Exod. xxi. 6. *i. e.* to the jubilee, because the year of jubilee was the utmost extent of that servitude. In like manner, Hannah says of her son Samuel, that he should appear before the Lord, and there abide for ever, 1 Sam. i. 22; which yet can be meant of no longer a time, than that of his natural life. or that part of his life only in which he was capable of ministering legally. And so again, the doors of the temple are said to be everlasting, Psal. xxiv. 7. *i. e.* the temple itself, and its gates were fixed and permanent. in comparison of the tabernacle, which was removed from place to place, and were in a fabric that was to last a long time; and therefore from this expression, the eternal obligation of the Levitical laws can by no means be inferred: on the contrary, all that is meant by it, is, that they should continue no longer than the Jewish state and polity did continue, as our learned Kidder, in his *Demonstration of the Messiah*, part 3 has abundantly shewn.

§ Kidder's *Demonstration*, part 2. c. 1.    <sup>h</sup> Jer. xxxi. 31.  
<sup>i</sup> 2 Pet. 12.    <sup>k</sup> Rev. xxi. 1.

much more beautiful and glorious. succeed; so it reflects no dishonour upon him, to bring in a new covenant <sup>l</sup>, established upon better promises, and by the means of that, to vacate his former institutions.

An objection.

‘ But if the evangelical covenant was, in this respect, so much superior to the legal, why did not God communicate to mankind so great a favour sooner? Why was the Heathen world left in darkness so long? But more especially God’s peculiar people, why were they kept under the beggarly elements of the law, when such a perfect and glorious dispensation lay all this while dormant in the bosom of the Almighty God?’

Answered, by shewing that there was always a covenant between God and man.

Now, in answer to these questions, it might be sufficient to say, that so it pleased God to act, whose wisdom is infinite, and <sup>m</sup> whose glory it is (according to the thoughts of the wise man) to conceal the causes and reasons of his actions from mankind. But in calling Christ *the mediator of the New Testament*. <sup>n</sup> and *the lamb that was slain from the foundation of the world*, he has vouchsafed to assign a reason for his delaying the gospel-dispensation so long. For this intimates to us, that there was all along, a covenant between Christ and his heavenly Father, concerning the redemption of mankind; that, upon the foreknowledge of their transgression, Christ undertook to be their mediator, and engaged, as their proxy, to come down upon earth, to assume human nature, to fulfil the law which they should violate, and to satisfy God’s justice, by offering his blood a sacrifice for their sins; that, until the time should come for Christ to execute this engagement, all these things should be looked upon as actually done, his humiliation effected, his blood shed, God’s justice satisfied, and man in a state of reconciliation with him; consequently that there was a Saviour of the world, even before the world began; a constant mediator between God and man, a standing propitiation for sin, and a daily intercessor at God’s right-hand, whose merits were available, and righteousness imputable, to all the race of Adam, though they, in their several generations, might not have the happiness to know it. And if this (as it seems to be) is the import of the words, then will it follow, that Christianity, in this sense, was as old as the creation; that mankind, in the earliest ages of the world, were under the same dispensation in effect,

<sup>l</sup> Heb. viii. 6.  
Rev. xiii. 8.

<sup>m</sup> Prov. xxv, 2.

<sup>n</sup> Heb. ix. 15.

effect, that we are now; had the same admission to the throne of grace; the same assistance (though not in degree) to live virtuously; and, <sup>o</sup> *if any man sinned, the same advocate with the Father, even Jesus Christ the righteous, who is the eternal propitiation for sin*: And the only difference is, <sup>p</sup> that what was originally engaged for, is since actually fulfilled; and the blessings, which they had, but were not acquainted with, God, in his good time, has declared unto us by an express revelation. But all this while they were under the same covenant, and (upon a proper use of the means afforded them) in the same state of salvation with us: For <sup>q</sup> *in every age, and every nation, he that feared God, and worked righteousness, was accepted with him*; and it is injurious to his goodness and justice, and other sacred attributes, to say, that he either is, or ever was, a respecter of persons.

And as he is no respecter of persons, so has he always discovered himself to be a God of order, and not of confusion; and therefore it seems requisite, that he should proceed by degrees, and not introduce the most perfect dispensation, till others, of an inferior and less perfect nature, had gone before. In the creation of the world we read, that trees, and plants, and all kinds of vegetables, were made before beasts, that have a sensitive life; and that all kinds of beasts were made before man, who has a rational soul, and is the most excellent of all God's works in this lower world: And, in like manner, it is reasonable to suppose, that God should make a gradual increase in his revelations, and proceed from the shadow to the substance, from types to realities, and from lesser to greater discoveries: And to this purpose the Apostle to the Hebrews informs us, that the worthies, who lived under the law, and had <sup>r</sup> *obtained a good report by faith, received not the promise*, (i. e. the full intent of it, in the coming of Christ,) *God having provided some better things for us, that they, without us, should not be made perfect*. Though therefore we may think, with the royal preacher, that <sup>s</sup> *truly light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun*; yet we are to consider, that the darkness of the night, which may resemble the religion of nature, and the dawning of the day, which may represent the institutions of the law, were to have their stated periods, before our <sup>t</sup> *Sun of right-*

G g 2

<sup>o</sup> 1 John ii. 2. <sup>p</sup> Edward's Survey of methods of religion.

<sup>q</sup> Acts x. 35. <sup>r</sup> Heb. xi. 29. 40. <sup>s</sup> Eccles. xi. 7. <sup>t</sup> Mal. iv. 2.



*righteousness was to rise with healing in his wings*, i. e. the Prince and Saviour of mankind was to make his entrance upon the stage of the world, <sup>u</sup> not till after the legal services were expired, the predictions of the patriarchs and prophets accomplished, and the appearances of angels, and visions, of revelations, and extraordinary declarations from heaven, had made way for his arrival.

\* What the Platonists hold concerning the several powers and faculties of men's souls, *viz.* that, in due time and place, they orderly awaken into act; and, when a lower power is extinguished, a more extended and enlarged capacity succeeds it, a more divine faculty and life spring up, and are invigorated; what these philosophers (I say) hold concerning human souls, is true of religion, and its several dispensations. There is a gradual subordination of these several ceremonies; and, upon the cessation and extinction of one that is inferior, a more sublime and perfect one arises in its room. What God had been pleased to substitute in place of that administration which he hath thought proper to revoke, is the Christian revelation, of the excellency of whose doctrines, both moral and speculative, we shall have occasion <sup>v</sup> to discourse hereafter; our present business is, to enquire into the merit of the books wherein these doctrines are contained; and herein to consider their truth and authority, their number and genuineness, their method, and style, and manner of composition, together with some other properties, and adjuncts, peculiar to them, as the rule of our faith and manners.

The truth  
and autho-  
rity of the  
scriptures  
of the New  
Testament.

That in the reign of Tiberius, there lived such a person as Jesus Christ, and suffered death under Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor in Judea, is what Christians in all countries profess; what Jews of all ages have acknowledged; and what even Heathen authors (such as Suetonius <sup>z</sup>, Tacitus, and Pliny *jun.*) have recorded. That this Jesus had, from the very first, a succession of men to publish his doctrines, and to testify to the world the history of his life and actions; and that in a short space of time, a certain number of approved historians recorded them in writing, to be the pillar and foundation of all truth, (as the ancients call it,) is what the earliest writers in the Christian church relate, and our present possession of the books them-

<sup>u</sup> Edward's Survey, vol. i.    \* Ibid.    <sup>v</sup> Vid. Dissert. 4.  
<sup>z</sup> Vid. Grotius, De veritate Christ. relig.

themselves does imply. That the books, which have descended to us, are the same which these historians indited, the writers of the very next age, and every age since, have asserted; both Jews and Heathens, in their tracts against Christianity, have allowed; and the numerous passages cited from them, and, in their names, even to this day, do evince: And lastly, that the contents of these books, in their descent to us, have not suffered any considerable alteration, but, (excepting some few variations, occasioned by the negligence of transcribers,) from the days of the apostles, and apostolic men, to the present age, have always been the same; the long continuance of the Autographa in the church, the many copies and transcripts taken from them, and their early translations into various languages, have, under the providence of God, been our security.

Since then we have in our hand authentic records of our Saviour's life and actions, let us look a little into them, and see, whether their authors have been defective in any of the marks and characters of true historians.

That the Evangelists were persons of too much truth and honesty to relate any wilful lies, is evident from the whole tenor of their writings; wherein the strictest precepts about speaking truth and the severest prohibitions of guile and dissimulation, either in our words or actions, do every where meet us. Men of cunning and artifice have all their fawning and insinuating ways to captivate the weak, and such as delight in flattery; but with what plainness and simplicity do they go about to persuade men to become Christians, when they barely relate the matters of fact concerning the resurrection of Jesus, saying, that they themselves *were eye-witnesses of it*, and, upon the credit of this their testimony, expect that we should assent? Had they been minded to aggrandize their master, they would have displayed indeed the wonderfulness of his birth, the many miracles he wrought, the descent of the Holy Ghost upon him, the voice from heaven declaring him to be the Son of God, the glories of his resurrection, and the triumph of his ascension; but by all means would they have laboured to conceal the obscurity of his birth and parentage, the low condition of his life, and the shameful and ignominious circumstances of his death. Had they been minded to extol him above measure, as a great and a mighty worker of miracles, they would have expatiated upon every one that came in their way, and not comprised some

The Evangelists true historians from their own characters.

in

in the short compass of a verse or two, and concealed others under a general enumeration, as we find they frequently do. Had they designed to set off themselves, their labours, and perils, and bold adventures, for the sake of the gospel, they might have described them in all their pleasing horror; but (what is a singular instance of their truth and ingenuity) their own mean extraction and employments, their ignorance and mistakes, their ambitious contentions, cowardly desertions, and base denial of their Lord in time of the greatest exigence and distress, they themselves have left upon record, for all succeeding ages to peruse and censure: Or, had they designed any private profit or advantage to themselves, they took the most improper method in the world, in publishing what to the Jews they knew would be a stumbling-block, and to the Gentiles foolishness; and what they could not but foresee, would expose both them and their companions to scorn and contempt, to dangers and hazards, to poverty and want, to bonds and imprisonment, and death itself.

their sufficiency of intelligence.

Now, when persons are both above all secular interest, and forward to lay open too their own faults and failings, merely for the sake of truth, it is a strong presumption, that they have no inclination to write falsehoods, if so be they are competent judges of what they are about, and have sufficient means of information in their power. And herein the evangelists could not be defective, because (even upon the supposition of no divine assistance or inspiration) they had persons now living to give them full instructions, as to the great periods and actions of our Saviour's life. <sup>a</sup> Of his conception and birth, and other particulars preceding his baptism, they might have an account from Simeon and Anna, and the parents of John, as well as from Joseph and Mary. Of his baptism, and what thereupon ensued they might have intelligence from John and his disciples. Of his fasting and temptation, from the same John, who not unlikely retired with him into the wilderness, (where himself had been before,) and continued with him until his return; and of the several transactions in his public ministry, they themselves (as well as other apostles) were eye and ear witnesses, and as competent judges of what they heard and saw as the greatest philosophers living. By these, and several other helps, they might be supplied

<sup>a</sup> Grews's Cosmog. fac.



supplied with proper materials for their respective histories; and when they had thus compiled them, (we speak still upon the supposition of no inspiration) their fidelity appeared, in their speedy committing to writing.

And indeed, if we look into the contents of the histories, as well as the characters of the historians, we shall soon perceive such a simplicity, as well as majesty, in their narrations, such purity in their precepts and such sublimity in their doctrines, as plainly denote them to be of divine revelation. and the contents of their gospels.

Men of quick parts and ingenuity, it is true, may tell us cunningly-devised fables, and amuse their readers with tales and romances that had never any foundation in nature: but to frame such an excellent system of morality as is contained in the gospels; to give such an extraordinary account of the satisfaction for sin, and of the nature and office of a mediator; to feign the life and actions of a Messiah, which should accord so exactly with the predictions of the prophets, and the types and prefigurations of the Mosaic law; and to make the rewards and punishments of another life so agreeable to human reason, and so worthy of the Divine Majesty; this was a scheme which these poor illiterate men were no more able to invent, than they were to create a world. And yet, notwithstanding the great variety and difficulty of this province, it is wonderful to observe, how all the four evangelists, who wrote at different times, and in distant places, agree, not only in the main topics, but sometimes in the most minute circumstances; inasmuch, that whenever they seem to disagree, <sup>b</sup> (which chiefly arises from their not confining themselves to the same words, or the same order of time, and, with a little critical observation, may easily be reconciled,) whenever they disagree, I say, it looks as if the Spirit of God designed on purpose that it should be so, not only that they might be distinct witnesses of the same things, but that all succeeding ages of the Christian world might see with their eyes, that they neither transcribed from one another, nor combined nor conspired together like crafty knaves.

I might here produce the testimony which God gave to the truth of the gospel, <sup>c</sup> *by signs and wonders, and by divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost*; and what a mighty proof the evangelists themselves gave of their fidelity in composing

<sup>b</sup> Grew's Cosmog. fac. p. 304.

<sup>c</sup> Heb. ii. 4.

composing those writings, which they, and thousands more, were not afraid to seal with their blood: But because an agreement with other authors is always reputed a good token of historical probity, I shall rather take notice of some few facts, whereby the professed enemies of Christianity (both Jews and Pagans) have confirmed the authority of these sacred penmen.

The testi-  
mony of  
other  
authors.

The <sup>d</sup> coming of a king out of the east, who should do great and mighty actions, was a constant report, (founded on the Sibylline prophecies) which prevailed about the time of our Saviour's birth; and <sup>e</sup> Tacitus (as a great politician and statesman) will needs have fulfilled in Vaspasian or Titus, because they were called out of Judea to the empire of Rome. The appearance of a wonderful star at the time of his nativity, is mentioned by <sup>f</sup> Pliny, in his Natural History, under the name of a *bright comet*. The murder of the babes of Bethlehem is recorded by Dion, in his life of Octavius Cæsar; and Macrobius (who relates the thing more at large) tells us, that Herod, upon the account of the same jealousy, ordered his own son to be slain. The miracles that Jesus did, when he entered upon his ministry; the title he laid claim to of being the Messiah, or a divine person sent from heaven to redeem mankind; and the doctrines which he preached, (as they are recorded in the gospels,) are acknowledged and confessed by Celsus, Julian, and Porphyry, as <sup>g</sup> several of the ancient fathers assure us. The death of our blessed Saviour, and the manner of his suffering under Pontius Pilate, and in the reign of Tiberius, is mentioned (as we said) both by Tacitus and Lucian. The universal eclipse, which happened at the time of his passion, is taken notice of by <sup>h</sup> Dionysius, before he was converted to the faith. The terrible earthquake, which was at the same time, is related by Dion, Pliny, and Suetonius; and the *rending of the veil of the temple*, (mentioned by three evangelists,) is testified by the Jewish historian Josephus; who, among other passages, has given us this memorable one concerning our Saviour Christ. ' At this time there was one Jesus, a wise man; ' if I may call him a man; for he did most wonderful ' works, and was a teacher of those who received the truth

<sup>d</sup> Edward's Truth and authority of the Holy Scripture.

<sup>e</sup> Lib. 2. and 25. <sup>f</sup> Natural History, lib. 2. c. 4. <sup>g</sup> Orig. cont Cels.; Cyril cont Julian.; et August. Civ. Dei, lib. 22. c. 18. <sup>h</sup> Annal. lib. 18. c. 44.

‘truth with delight. He brought many to his persuasion, both of the Jews and Gentiles. This was Christ : And though he was, by the instigation of some of our nation, and by Pilate’s sentence, hung on the cross ; yet those who loved him at first, did not cease to do so ; for he came to life again the third day, and appeared to them : And to this day there remains a sect of men, who have from him the name of *Christians*.’ A passage, which (as several \* learned authors have fully proved) is far from being an interpolation.

That God, who is a spirit, can speak as intelligibly to the spirits and minds of men, as men can speak to the ear, is obvious to our first reflections on the divine attributes ; and that there was some necessity for God’s communicating himself to the apostles in this manner, the difficulty of their province, which was to *preach the gospel to all nations and languages*, seems to imply. When Moses was sent to Pharaoh, and for fear of the face of so great king, was ready to retract, God, to encourage him, gives him the promise, that *he would be with his mouth, and with Aaron’s mouth, and would teach them what they should say* : And in like manner, when our Saviour tells his disciples, that *they should be brought before governors and kings for his sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles* ; he bids them take no thought how or what they should speak ; for it shall be given unto you, says he, in the same hour, what ye ought to say, for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost, or the Spirit of my Father, which speaketh in you. Now, if Moses was inspired upon that particular occasion, and the apostles, in cases

\* Upon the whole, I cannot see (says the translator of Josephus) the least reason to think this passage supposititious ; on the contrary, there seems as much evidence for the truth and sincerity of this place in Josephus, as of any other in all his works : And it would have been far more strange, if, in his circumstances and time when he wrote, he had said nothing of Christ, than that he saith what he does. Yet, if any one desires to be more fully satisfied in this particular, let him consult *Andreas Bosius’ Exercitationes hist. Critic. ; Chr. Arnoldus’s Collection of letters concerning the testimony of Josephus ; Vossius’s Chronologica sacra, c. 17. ; Huitius’s Demonstratio evangel. prop. 3. ; Patrick’s Demonstration of the divine authority of the law of nature, and the Christian religion, p. 222 ; Dr. Cave’s Historia literaria, part 2. p. 17 ; and Mr Martin, a French author, who has handled this subject ex professo, discourse 1.*

<sup>i</sup> Exod. iv. 12, 15. <sup>k</sup> Matth. x. 18. &c. Mark xiii. 11. &c.



cases that were but personal, when brought before magistrates upon account of their religion, had assistance extraordinary imparted to them, (as whoever looks into their defences must certainly acknowledge that they had,) there is much more reason for the same gifts and communications, in matters that were to be of general use to the church in all ages. To the end therefore that we might have no doubt concerning the doctrines which the apostles were to teach, we find our Saviour making them this farther promise: <sup>1</sup> *The comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you, i. e.* whatever doctrines I have commanded you to teach, these he will remind you of continually; and whatever I have omitted teaching you, (because you are not yet capable of receiving them) these he will instruct you in: For, that this is the true import of the promise, we may learn from the ensuing words; <sup>m</sup> *I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now; but when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he shall guide you into all truth, and he shall shew you things to come:* And from hence we may be assured, <sup>n</sup> that all the sermons and discourses of the Lord to his disciples, recorded in the evangelists, are faithfully delivered by his apostles, (as to the genuine sense and import of them,) otherwise the Holy Ghost did not *bring to their remembrance all things, which he had said unto them*; and that whatever they taught in any of their epistles, addressed to the Christian churches, they taught by the guidance and direction of the same Spirit, otherwise he did not *teach them all things, nor guide them into all truth.*

as appears  
from the  
nature and  
end of their  
writings.

And indeed considering that <sup>o</sup> the end of these writings was to be perpetual monuments of the doctrines of Jesus Christ, and a standing rule of faith to Christians in all ages of the world, there was a certain necessity (for fear that the churches should fall into error at any time) that their authors should be directed and assisted, in the composition of them, by some infallible guide. And, accordingly, we may observe, that (whatever conceptions we may have of their modesty) they are no where ashamed of making open declarations of their being divinely inspired.

<sup>1</sup> John xiv. 26. <sup>m</sup> John xvi. 12, 13. <sup>n</sup> Vid. Whitby's general preface before St. Matthew. <sup>o</sup> Vid. Du Pin's History of the canon.

spired. For <sup>p</sup> *I am a minister of Christ*, (says St. Paul), *according to the dispensation of God, which is given to me to fulfil (i. e. fully to preach) the word of God*; and <sup>q</sup> *for this cause thank we God without ceasing, because when ye received the word of God, which ye heard of us, ye received it, not as the word of men, but, as it is in truth, the word of God*; and therefore, <sup>r</sup> *if any man be a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge, that the things I write unto you are the commandment of the Lord*.

And that this was the acknowledgment of Christians in all ages from the beginning, viz. that the apostles, and other penmen of the books of the New Testament, were assisted in their writing, as well as in their preaching, by the Spirit of God, is evident from innumerable passages in the earliest fathers, and the constant <sup>s</sup> practice of the church, in reading these writings on the Lord's day, for the instruction of the people; in proving all their doctrines, and confuting heretics from their authority; and in esteeming such persons as denied their inspiration, no better than infidels: 'For what wickedness is this?' <sup>t</sup> says an ancient author, 'either they believe not the Holy Scriptures to be divinely inspired, and then they are infidels; or they pretend to be wiser than the Holy Ghost, and then they are mad, and possessed.'

Now, if persons so near the times of the apostles, that some of them either conversed with them, or were acquainted with their immediate successors; if the churches, which received these writings from the very hands of the apostles, and kept still the originals or authentic copies of them, did so unquestionably receive them as inspired writings, and look upon them as the rule and pillar of their faith; if they read them, together with those writings of the prophets, which on all hands were acknowledged to be the word of God; proved from them all the doctrines of the Christian faith; received them as the perfect rule of Christian duty; confuted all heresies and erroneous doctrines from them; and represented those as infidels who questioned or denied their inspiration from the Holy Ghost; they doubtless were well assured, that, as such, they were delivered to them by the apostles, and other sacred penmen: And if this was matter of fact, what reason have we, in these later ages, to call in question what was universally acknowledged by those who lived in the very

H h 2

time

<sup>p</sup> Col. i. 25. <sup>q</sup> 1 Theff. ii. 13. <sup>r</sup> 1 Cor. xiv. 37. <sup>s</sup> Vid. Whitby's General Preface. <sup>t</sup> Ibid. p. 14.

time wherein the books were written, and sent to the churches of Christ ?

That the primitive Christians had sufficient opportunities of knowing the genuine books of the New Testament.

That the primitive Christians had sufficient means and opportunities to distinguish the genuine and inspired writings, from what were apocryphal or spurious, no one can doubt, who considers, that the original writings of the apostles themselves (whose hands they were not unacquainted with) were in their custody ; that though the apostles wrote to whole churches, yet particular men are frequently named in their epistles, which was a great means to ascertain their authority ; that no sooner were these epistles sent (as is plain in the case of <sup>u</sup> St. Paul) to particular churches, but they were published and read, with other sacred scriptures, in their open assemblies ; that copies authentically attested were immediately taken of them, sufficient to answer the number of the churches and church-officers, which the apostles had every where settled ; and (what is more than all) that at this time there still remained the miraculous gift <sup>x</sup> of discerning spirits, whereby persons who were endued with it, were enabled to distinguish true revelation from impostures.

That the canon of the New Testament was settled by St John

It is reasonable to suppose therefore, that, during this period of time, wherein the helps and advantages attending the church were so many, God should provide himself with a proper instrument to settle and determine the rule of our faith, and thereby preserve the Christian world from all future uncertainty. And accordingly, some have observed, that St. John, who wrote his gospel and epistles against those heretics chiefly, who were the most notorious forgers of spurious, and corrupters of the true books of the Scripture, had his life prolonged by providence, that he might be able both to vindicate and complete the whole canon thereof. It is certain from Eusebius, that he revised the three gospels before he wrote his own ; and Photius tells us another circumstance, *viz.* that the versions of the gospels were approved by him, as well as the originals ; nor can we doubt, but that, in so long a life, he had seen the works of the rest of the apostles, and had given them his approbation : As what indeed could be more worthy his care, or more necessary at that juncture, than that he should ascertain the authority of those writings, which were to be the church's great preservative against those heresies, which, even then, became too numerous, and which, he could not but foresee, would occasion no small scandal and disturbance in future ages ?

What

<sup>u</sup> Col. iv. 16. ; 2 Pet. iii. 16. <sup>x</sup> 1 Cor. xii. 10.



What gives a farther confirmation of this opinion is the testimony of the same Eusebius, who, <sup>y</sup> in his Ecclesiastical history, tells us, that in the beginning of the second century, about the time of St John's death, or immediately after it, there were great numbers of persons, disciples, who travelled over the world, building up churches, where the apostles had before laid the foundation, and preaching the faith of Christ in the places that had never heard of it before; who carried the copies of the gospels to all the churches whither they went, and, not improbably, took along with them other parts of the New Testament besides, because they were owned and admitted every where soon after. Tertullian <sup>z</sup>, who flourished at the end of the second century, tells us expressly, that the law and the prophets, the gospels and apostolic writings, were the books from whence we were to learn our faith; and, that we may know what he meant by apostolic writings, he appeals, as occasion offers, not only to the four gospels, but to the acts of the apostles, to all the epistles of St Paul, (except that to the Hebrews,) to the first of St Peter, and the first of St John, as the writings of the persons to whom they are ascribed. Nay, Irenæus, <sup>a</sup> who lived before him, and conversed (as himself tells us) with Polycarp, and others that had been instructed by the apostles, and immediate disciples of our Lord, mentions the code of the New Testament, as well as of the Old, and calls the one, as well as the other, *the oracles of God, and writings dictated by his Word and Spirit*. And what wonder indeed, if the first fathers of the church did so, when we find the greatest adversaries of the Christian name, even <sup>b</sup> Julian and <sup>c</sup> Celsus acknowledging their genuineness by quoting their words, and referring us to them upon all occasions?

This proved from Tertullian, Irenæus, and the confession of the enemies of the apostles.

Some difference indeed there always was in the primitive church, concerning the order wherein the epistles were placed, but none at all in relation to the gospels. The Acts of the apostles, as containing an account of what they did and suffered, were very properly placed after the four gospels, which are the several histories of our Saviour's life and actions. The epistles did not stand according to the order

The common order of the genuine books.

<sup>y</sup> Lib. 3. c. 37.    <sup>z</sup> De præscript. hæret. c. 36.    <sup>a</sup> Vid. Richardson's Canon of the New Testament vindicated.    <sup>b</sup> Vid. Cyril. Alex. cont. Jul. lib. 10.    <sup>c</sup> Just. Mart. Dial.

order of time wherein they were wrote, but according to the number or dignity of the persons to whom they were addrested. The whole collection consists of 27 tracts; And we shall set them down according to the order wherein they now stand, which (as it appears from ancient commentators, as well as all Greek and Latin manuscripts) was the most common and general order wherein they always stood.

The four gospels of

St Matthew, St Mark, St Luke, St John.

The Acts of the apostles.

The fourteen epistles of St Paul to

The Romans, Corinthians 1. Corinthians 2. Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Theſſalonians 1. Theſſalonians 2. Timothy 1. Timothy 2. Titus, Philemon, the Hebrews.

The seven catholic epistles of

St James, St Peter 1. St Peter 2. St John 1. St John 2. St John 3. St Jude. And

The Revelation of St John.

St Matthew The gospel of St Matthew, which, according to the sense of all antiquity, was originally written in Syriac, (the vulgar tongue, at that time, in Jerusalem, and commonly in the New Testament called *Hebrew* <sup>d</sup> was, in the apostles' time, translated into Greek, which translation, in the beginning of the church, was published in all nations, preserved without alteration, cited by Clemens Romanus, Barnabas, Ignatius, and Polycarp, and <sup>e</sup> after the corruption of the original, was always looked upon as authentic and canonical.

St Mark, The Gospel of St Mark was originally the same as we now have it, composed in Greek by a disciple of St Peter, who, in his first epistle, styles him <sup>f</sup> *his son*, because very probably he had converted him to the Christian faith. It was certainly revised and approved by that great apostle, and from its first appearing, allowed to be canonical, as is evident from several passages, which Justin Martyr, a very early writer in the church, is known to cite from it.

St Luke, The Gospel of St Luke was written in more elegant Greek than ordinary, by a disciple of St Paul, who attended him in his travels, and continually assisted him in the labour of the ministry, as we may learn from the History.

<sup>d</sup> Du Pin's History of the New Testament, vol. 1. c. 2.

<sup>e</sup> Vid. Dissert. 1. of this book, <sup>f</sup> 1 Pet. v. 13.

story of the acts, and <sup>g</sup> the advantageous character which the apostle gives him. The apostle is therefore said to have assisted him in the composition of his history, which, upon that account, is quoted by Clemens Romanus, Barnabas, and Irenæus, as scriptures of undoubted authority.

The Gospel of St John was the work of our Saviour's <sup>and</sup> favourite apostle, which, according to Eusebius, was published last of all, as a supplement of what the other evangelists had omitted; and, from its first appearance, <sup>h</sup> was always received as authentic scripture. Justin Martyr and Irenæus have both quoted passages out of it; and (what tends not a little to its commendation) the Platonic philosopher, Amelius, avers that the barbarian (as he calls St John) had hit on the right notion, when, in the first chapter of his gospel, he makes the word of God incarnate.

The book that is called the *Acts of the apostles* (which <sup>The Acts of the apostles.</sup> from the time of our Lord's ascension into heaven, contains the history of what his followers did in Judea and Jerusalem, until the time that they dispersed themselves to preach in different countries; and then continues a more particular account of St Paul's travels and actions, until he was carried to Rome in the reign of Tiberius) was composed by St Luke, as himself testifies in his preface to Theophilus, and had this evidence of its antiquity, that it was rejected by the heretic Cerinthus, who was contemporary with the apostles.

The fourteen epistles of St Paul were all, (except that <sup>St Paul :</sup> to the Hebrews) received with a general consent, and read in the churches, even in the first ages of the apostles, as appears from the testimony of St Peter, who gives us this character of his brother's writings, *viz.* <sup>i</sup> *that in them there are some things hard to be understood, which they, who are unlearned and unstable, wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, to their own destruction.*

The catholic Epistle of St James, (not of James <sup>k</sup> the <sup>St James.</sup> son of Zebedee, brother of St John, but of James the Just, our Lord's near kinsman, and bishop of Jerusalem,) according to the account of Eusebius and St Jerom, did, in their time, stand in the canon of the New Testament, though

<sup>g</sup> 2 Cor. viii. 18. *&c.*; 2 Tim. iv. 11.

<sup>h</sup> Nicholas's

Conference with the Theist, vol. 2. part 4. <sup>i</sup> 2 Pet. iii. 16.

<sup>k</sup> Du Pin's Hist. of the canon, *&c.* vol. 2. c. 2. sect. 9.



though it was not so commonly quoted by the most ancient of the fathers, as being both very short, and containing almost nothing but moral instructions.

St Peter. The first Epistle of St Peter was all along received in every church as canonical; nor was there any great reason to call in question the genuineness of the latter, since the author describes himself as a person who was present<sup>1</sup> at our Lord's transfiguration, and as the writer of the second letter to the same people, to whom he had directed his former, which are characters that can agree with none so well as with St Peter.

St John. The first epistle of St John is allowed by all antiquity to be authentic; nor were the other two ever disputed, whether they were divine writings or no, but only whether they were the compositions of the apostle whose name they bear; though it was not long before this dispute was decided by their admission into all the ancient canons of the New Testament, as having indeed the same spirit and sentiments, the same style and manner of expression with the first.

St Jude. The epistle of Jude, the brother of James, though questioned by some, was, upon mature consideration, received into all the catalogues of sacred books, from the time of Clemens Alexandrinus: And the book of Revelation, (which is the last in the New Testament,) for several reasons that<sup>m</sup> we shall hereafter assign, was the work of St John, and composed in the isle of Patmos, to which Irenæus, Eusebius, and several others, agree that he was banished.

Why some of these were doubted of; Some of these books indeed (as we have already hinted) were placed among the ἀντιλεγόμενα, or *doubtful pieces*, by the ancients; but for this many good reasons may be alleged. The epistle to the Hebrews had no time prefixed to it, which St Paul, out of a principle of modesty, might do, as not seeming to assume the office of an apostle to the Hebrews, which was St Peter's immediate province, and \* for this reason it went under some suspicion of not being

<sup>1</sup> 2 Pet. i. 16. &c.

<sup>m</sup> Vid. Dissert. i. in the following book.

\* Without entering into the testimony of the ancients, if we consult the epistle itself, we shall find circumstances in it that can scarce agree with any other person than St Paul: For it appears, that it was wrote in Italy, since the author of it salutes

being his. The second epistle of St Peter † was thought to differ in style from the first; that of St James, to maintain the doctrine of faith and good works, contrary to St Paul to the Roman; and that of St Jude, to quote a passage from an † apocryphal book; for which causes they might,

lutes the Hebrews by the name of Brethren in Italy, Heb. xiii. 24 by a person who was in bonds, but shortly expected his liberty, Heb. 13. 19. and who had Timothy for his fellow-labourer; which are three circumstances that agree in no other person but St Paul. It is certain, that St Luke (as some imagine) could not be the writer of this epistle: For, besides that the Hebraisms in it are much more frequent than in his gospel, it is evident that its author was a man of consummate knowledge in the ceremonies and mysteries of the Jews, which cannot be said of St Luke, who was originally a Gentile; and though others have ascribed it to Barnabas yet as it nowhere appears, that Barnabas ever staid in Italy or was in prison there, so the great difference of style between this and the genuine letter of Barnabas (which is much rougher, and far less elevated) plainly shews that this was the product of a different pen; and St Paul had reason (as Clemens of Alexandria informs us) not to put his name to the inscription of the letter, because writing to the Hebrews, who had a long time borne a prejudice against him, and judging that he should become suspected by them, he acted prudently in making that concealment; *Du Pin's History of the canon, &c. vol. 2. c. 2.*

† That there is a difference in the style of the first and second epistles of St Peter is allowed; but it is not such a difference as ought to create any doubt of the genuineness of the epistle. One reason is, because this difference of style does not run through the whole epistle, but affects only one part of it. Another reason is, that this difference may be more probably accounted for, than by supposing the second epistle to come from another hand than the first. The second epistle is divided into three chapters; the first and the third stand clear of this difficulty, agreeing very well with the style of the first epistle: The second chapter is full of bold figures, and abounds in pompous words and expressions. It is a description of the false prophets and teachers, who infested the church, and perverted the doctrines of the gospel and seems to be an extract from some ancient Jewish writer, who had left behind him a description of the false prophets of his own, and perhaps earlier times. If this be the case, where is the wonder, that a passage transcribed from another author, and inserted into the

might, for some time, he rejected. The second and third epistles of St John were too much levelled against the heretics of that age, not to provoke their endeavours to hinder their reception; and the book of Revelations contained some things which aimed so directly at Rome and the empire, that it might not be thought prudent at first to admit it into the canon.

but admitted into the canon sooner than is pretended.

Nor can it in the least diminish the credit and authority of the New Testament, to alledge, that the first recognition of its controverted books was by the council of Laodicea, 330 years after our Lord's ascension, <sup>n</sup> since it is plain, that the business of that council was, to declare, not so much which were the authentic books of Scripture, as which were not; the growth of heretical books having made it necessary then, though not before, (for the better information of the people,) to distinguish the true

second epistle, should differ in style from St Peter's first epistle? Since all must agree that though a man, when he expresses his own sentiment, writes in his own proper style, be it what it will, yet when he translates from another, he naturally follows the genius of the original and adopts the figures and metaphors of the author before him; *Bishop Sherlock's Dissertation, 1 annexed to the Use and intent of prophecy*

†What the true ancient book was, which St Jude quoted, by whom penned, or of what authority in the Jewish church, no mortal can tell. This only we know, that it was not among the canonical books. But, let the book be supposed to have been of as little authority as you please, yet if it contained a good description of the ancient false prophets, why might not St Jude make use of that description, as well as St Paul quote Heathen poets? Was it ever made an objection against the authority of his second epistle to Timothy, that he cites some ancient apocryphal book for the story of Jannes and Jambres? Or is it any diminution to the authority of the gospel that our Saviour, (as many learned men think,) in Luke xi 49 quotes another such book, under the title of *the Wisdom of God*, and appeals to it, as containing ancient prophecies? If not, how comes it to be any objection against St Jude's epistle, that he quotes a prophecy of Enoch from the like authority? For these reasons little regard is due to the objection of the ancients against the authority of St Jude's epistle; and accordingly, we are informed by St Jerom, that notwithstanding this piece of criticism, it was, in his days, universally received in the churches. *Auctoritatem, says he, vetustate jam et usu meruit, et inter sanctas Scripturas computatur*; Bishop Sherlock, *ibid*,

<sup>n</sup> Jenkin's Reasonableness, &c. vol. 2.



true from the false. For that the true were known long before this council made their declaration, ° is manifest from the fifty-ninth canon, which appoints, that no books which were *extra censuram*, i. e. none but such as were canonical, should be read in Christian assemblies; which title of canonical they had, because they were inserted in the apostles' canons, and the apostles' canons (according to the opinion of the best critics) were the canons of councils assembled before the council of Nice, because we find them referred to in that council; and were very probably styled *apostolical*, because they were made by men who lived next to the apostles' days, and who declared, in those canons, what they had received from them.

But allowing these disputed books to be of later admission than we have given them, yet the only just inference that we can deduce from thence, is, that since these books were not every where admitted upon their first appearing, this shews, that the church did not proceed rashly and carelessly in the affair; and since they were every where admitted afterward, this shews, that, upon examination, clear proof and evidence was found of their genuineness; and accordingly they have ever since been joined, by persons of all sects and opinions, to the rest of the books which we esteemed canonical.

Their late admission an argument for them.

We readily grant, that, in the primitive times, there were other books, besides the Holy Scriptures, wrote by pious and learned men, and held in such high esteem as to be read in Christian assemblies; but then we are to consider, that p how justly soever we may value them, yet, upon inquiry, we shall find, that there is something human, something of infirmity, something of fallibility in them, which makes them inferior to what is apostolical; that the best approved piece of them all (I mean the epistle of Clemens to the Corinthians) was, for many ages, supposed to be lost, and though, upon its appearing again, the best critics thought they had good reason to pronounce it genuine, yet they could not be sure that it was entirely free from corruption or interpolation; that though these ecclesiastical writers (as they were called) were, for some time, read in churches, yet they were not read as canonical scriptures but only in the nature of homilies, and exhortations to virtue and piety; and that, in process of times even

The case of other ancient books.

l i 2

this

° Ibid.

p Grew's *Cosmog. sacra.*

Clerk's

Reflections on Amyntor.

this practice came to be laid aside, and nothing allowed to be read publicly, but what was of undoubted apostolic authority.

The canon of the New Testament contained entire.

This is the true history of the canon of Scripture, in the earliest times of Christianity; and that it continued the same in succeeding ages, without any addition or mutilation, its being translated into so many tongues, in the four first centuries, and dispersed into so many hands, in so many different countries, as well as \* the copies of great antiquity still extant among us, are a convincing argument; especially considering, that the several facts of Christians were, all along, so jealous and watchful over each other, that no seditious piece could be introduced, or genuine piece suppressed, without their knowledge and remonstrance; nor can we imagine, how any catalogue of books should be received, (exclusive of all others,) but upon the clearest evidence and conviction of their containing the true and only authentic rule of faith and practice.

Its style and method vindicated.

We readily own again, that, in the books of the New Testament, there is not that elegance of style, or accuracy of method, which may be observed in some human compositions; but then it ought to be considered, that as † too great a niceness about these matters is an argument of a little genius, and an employ unbecoming the dignity of the Spirit of God; so the apostle has given us a very good reason, why least of all it should have found a place in such scriptures, as were designed for the rule of our faith: *“And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech, or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God; for I determined not know any thing among you, but Jesus Christ, and him crucified; and my speech, and my preaching was, not with enticing words of man’s wisdom, but in demonstration*

\* Such are the Cambridge copy, in Greek and Latin, containing the four gospels, and the Acts of the Apostles; that in the French king’s library, containing St Paul’s epistles; and that in the library of the Benedictines, at St Germain’s, all supposed to be above a thousand years old. The Alexandrian copy is believed to have been written by Thecla, above 1300 years ago; a Syriac manuscript, in the library of the Duke of Florence, and a Gothic translation of the four evangelists formerly belonging to the abbey of Werdin, are each of them of above a thousand years antiquity; besides many more which are in private hands. *Jenkins’s Reasonableness &c vol. 2.*

† *Jenkins’s Reasonableness, &c. vol. 2. § 1 Cor, ii. 1. &c.*

*monstration of the Spirit, and of the power, that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.* <sup>c</sup> Strains of rhetoric, whereby the passions are raised to a great heighth, are sometimes necessary to gain a present point, and carry a cause by a violent and sudden transport, before reason can interpose; but since religion was to be propounded upon reasonable motives, there was no need for any art of this kind when the evidence of the miracles, by which it was established, (here called the *demonstration of the Spirit, and of power,*) afforded so many other more certain and convincing means of persuasion.

But there is another way of accounting for the want of elegance, as well as uniformity, in the style and method of the evangelical writers, and that is, by supposing, that, though the Spirit of God took care to direct and over-rule them all along, so as to make it impossible for them to record any thing but what was consonant to truth and expressive of his meaning; yet he might nevertheless leave them to their own words and manner of expression, which, considering the difference of their parts and education, must necessarily occasion a great variety of style, and sometimes solecisms, or confusion of method in their compositions: <sup>u</sup> Which solecisms, if they were but expressive of their meaning, were, in that respect, as valuable as the greatest propriety of language; and which confusion the Holy Spirit might rather allow of, because it might be of use to prevent the Scriptures from being corrupted or falsified, as they might have been, if either their historical parts had been digested into diaries or annals, or their preceptive part reduced to several distinct heads, and placed according to the rules of art.

What we have said in our former apparatus concerning <sup>o</sup> her <sup>et</sup>. the great obscurity, seeming contradictions, frequent digressions, tedious repetitions, false reasoning, and impertinent relations, that are complained of in the Old Testament, may, with a small variation be applied to the solution of the like objections that are made against the New. It is reasonable to suppose, <sup>\*</sup> that a book, written so many ages ago, since which all the circumstances of the world have been strangely altered; a book, written in languages which bear so little analogy to those we converse in; a book that delivers many new and unheard of doctrines, which

<sup>c</sup> Jenkins, *ibid.* <sup>u</sup> Nichols's Conference. <sup>\*</sup> Jenkins's Reasonableness, vol. 2.



which the world would know nothing of, unless they were recorded here ; that speaks of many mysterious points concerning the divine nature, and the surprising dispensations of God's providence ; that gives us an account of a spiritual kingdom, and another world, which, in this imperfect state, we can have no exact notices of ; that combats all the vices and vanities of this wicked world, and, consequently, incites all the wit and malice of the loose and unthinking part of mankind to find out objections against it : It is reasonable to suppose, I say, that a book of this kind should be more liable to difficulties and exceptions, than any other of common composition. But then we are to consider, that this is a fault, not chargeable upon the Holy scriptures, but upon human infirmities, the depravation of our nature, and the insufficiency of our understanding to comprehend the deep things of God.

and its  
translations  
considered.

What the use and character of the ancient Vulgate, as well as more modern Latin translations, both of the Old and New Testament, are ; and what the rise and occasion of the English version, which at present we make use of ; in what point of light we are to consider its defects, and, by what means and assistance, be enabled to make a better ; these were subjects that fell under our observation in our former preparatory discourse, and all we have to add in this place is, the great caution and sincerity, as well as skill and sagacity, that is requisite in every one that undertakes a work of this nature, bearing always in mind that awful denunciation, which is continually hanging over his head : *⁊ If any man shall add to the things contained in this book, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written therein : And if any man shall take away from the words of this book, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.*

THE

# THE HISTORY

OF THE

B I B L E.

## BOOK VIII.

*Containing an Account of Things, from the Birth of CHRIST to the Completion of the Canon of the New Testament. In all about 97 years.*

### CHAP. I.

*From the Birth of Christ, to the Beginning of the first Passover.*

#### THE HISTORY.

AS soon as the time, foretold by the prophets \*, for the incarnation of the Son of God, began to draw near, † the evangelist St. Luke gives us this account

A. M.  
3999, &c.  
Ant. chrif.  
1, &c.  
ant. ær.

\* The two principal prophets who determine the period when our Lord was to appear in the world are Daniel and Haggai. Daniel foretels, that, at the end of the seventy prophetic weeks, i. e. at the expiration of four hundred and ninety years after the building of the walls of Jerusalem, the Messiah should come chap. 9. 25 ; and Haggai prophecies, that before the destruction of the second temple, (even when the sceptre was departed from Judah, Gen. xlix. 10 ) the desire of all nations should come, and by his frequent personal appearance in the temple, make the glory of that latter house much greater than that of the former, chap. ii 7. &c.

Vulg 5.  
from the  
beginning  
of the Go-  
spels 10  
Matth. 9.  
8. Mark ii.  
23. Luke  
vi. 1.

† The word 'Ευαγγέλιον signifies, in general, good news, and is of the same import with our Saxon word gospel ; only in the sacred use of them both. there seems to be a metonymy. whereby the words that denote good news are set to signify the history of that good news. viz. of the birth and life the miracles and doctrine, the death and resurrection of our Saviour Christ ;

The birth  
of John the  
Baptist, and  
of Jesus  
Christ.

A M. account of the birth of his great forerunner John the Baptist \*.  
3299, &c  
ant. Christ.

1. &c  
ant. Ær.  
Vulg. 5.  
from the  
beginning  
of the Go-  
spels to  
Math ix.  
8. Mark ii.  
23. Luke  
vi. 1.

While Christ; all of which put together, do make up the joyful tidings which we call the *gospel*; and from the etymology of the words, the persons who have recorded the life and actions of our Saviour are called *evangelists*, or writers of the gospel. The works of this kind, which are received as canonical, are but four, viz that of St Matthew, St Mark, St Luke, and St John; but the spurious pieces which are handed down to us (even though several of them be lost) do exceed the number of forty. The truth is, the ancient heretics began generally with attacking the gospels, in order either to maintain their errors, or excuse them. To this purpose some rejected all the genuine gospels, and substituted others that were spurious in their room. This produced the gospels of Apelles, Basilides, Cerinthus, the Ebionites, and Gnostics. Others corrupted the true gospels, by suppressing whatever gave them any trouble, and inserting whatever might favour their erroneous doctrines. Thus the Nazarens corrupted the original gospels of St Matthew, as the Marcionites did that of St Luke; while the Alogians rejected St John, as the Ebionites did St Matthew; and the Valentinians only acknowledged St John, as the Cerinthians did St Mark; *Hammond's Annotations*; *M. Fabricius's Codex apocryphus N. Test*; and *Calmet's Dictionary*, under the word *gospel*.

\* There are two places in the prophets referred to, both by our Saviour and his evangelists, wherein the Baptist is described under this character. The former is in the prophet Isaiah, *The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make streight in the desert an high-way for our God* chap. xl. 3.; and the latter (which is more plain and express) is in Malachi, *Behold I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me, &c.* chap. iii. 1. Both the passages allude to harbingers, and such other officers, as upon the journies of princes, are employed to take care that the ways should be levelled and put in order, and all such obstructions removed as might hinder their passage, or render it less commodious; and the manner in which the Baptist thus prepared the way of the Lord, was, by his preaching, and by his baptism. By his preaching, he endeavoured to bring the Jews to a due sense of their sins; to abate their confidence in being of Abraham's seed, and punctual observers of the ceremonial law; and to forewarn all of the dreadful effects of God's anger, who did not bring forth fruits worthy of repentance: And by his baptism, when administered to such persons as were under the obligation of the law, he plainly shewed, that he was therein admitting them to some privileges, which they had not before, viz. the remission



While his father \* Zacharias (who was a priest of the eighth course, viz. the course of Abiah) was executing his office at Jerusalem, (which was in the latter

A. M.  
3999, &c.  
Ant. Chris.  
I, &c.  
part aut. Ær.  
Vulg. 5.

of their sins upon their faith and obedience to him, who was the messenger of the covenant. Since therefore the Baptist was born six months before our Saviour, and entered upon his ministry six months before our Saviour began his; and since no part of his doctrine terminated in himself, and his baptism referred every one to Christ for acceptance and salvation; he is very properly said to be his *harbinger*, a messenger sent to prepare his way before him, or to set all things in readiness for his approach, by putting an end to the old, and making an entrance into the new, dispensation, in which sense he is represented by the fathers as a kind of middle partition between the law and the gospel; of the law, as a thing now come to a period; and of the gospel, as commencing under him who was shortly to make his appearance; *Stanhope on the epistles and gospels*, vol. 1.

from the  
beginning  
of the Go-  
spels to  
Matth. ix.  
8 Mark ii.  
23. Luke  
vi. 1

\* Some of the fathers were of opinion, that this Zacharias was, at this time, high priest, upon a false supposition, that the offering of incense was reserved to the high-priest only: But, besides the testimony of Josephus, who tells us expressly, that Simon, the son of Boethus, was high priest this year; it appears from St. Luke himself, that Zacharias was no more than an ordinary priest of the family or course of Abiah, which, of the four and twenty courses, appointed by David for the service of the temple when it should be built, was the eighth, 1 Chron. xxiv. 10. For though it was the high-priest's prerogative, on the great day of expiation, to enter into *the holy of holies*, and there burn incense, which no ordinary priest might do, Levit. xvi. 12.; yet, in the common service of the day, each priest, whose lot it was, went every morning and evening into the *sanctum* or body of the temple, and there burnt the daily incense upon the altar, which was placed before the veil of the most holy place, Exod. xxx. 6. &c. For these, and several other reasons, which annotators have produced, it seems plain, that Zacharias could not possibly be high-priest at this time; and, whatever credit may be given to the tradition,—That, by the order of Herod the Great, he was put to death between the porch and the altar, viz. in the inclosure that surrounded the altar of burnt-offerings; and that, when every one was ignorant of this murderer, a certain priest, thinking that he staid too long entered into the temple, and found him dead, and his blood congealed upon the ground, and, at the same time, hearing a voice, that it should never be wiped out until his revenger came; whatever credit I say, may be given to this tradition. it was doubtless upon this foundation, that ma-

A. M. 3999, &c. Ant. Chriſt. 1, &c. au. Ar. Vulg 5. from he beginning of the Goſpels to Matt. ix. 8 Mark ii. 23 Luke vi. 1.

part of the reign of Herod the Great \*) it came to his lot † to go into the temple with his cenſer in his hand, in order to burn incenſe, while the people without were ‡ offering

ny of the ancients thought, that Zacharias, the father of John the Baptiſt was that Zachariah, ſon of Barachiah, mentioned by our Saviour in the goſpel, whoſe blood was ſhed between the temple and the altar; *Pool's and Whitby's Annotations*; and *Calmet's Dictionary*.

\* St Luke, in particular, takes notice, that the time when our Lord's forerunner was to be conceived, was in the reign of Herod, ſon of Antipater, (for it was Herod Antipas that put him to death) commonly called *the Great*, who (under the Romans) fought his way to the government of the Jews, and came to his throne by the ſlaughter of their Sanhedrim, by which means he extinguished all the dominion which, till that time, they held in the tribe of Judah, not in a ſingle perſon indeed, (for that was extinguished in the Aſmonæan family,) but in a ſelect number out of that royal tribe, and ſo verified the prophecy of old Jacob, Gen. xlix. 10 *That the ſceptre, or government, was departed from Judah, and the law giver from his ſeed*, which was a certain ſign that Shiloh, i. e. the Meſſiah, was ſhortly to come; *Pool's Annotations*.

† The ſeveral courſes of the prieſts began on the Sabbath-day, and continued to ſerve till the Sabbath following; but, becauſe they were now increaſed to a great number, (Joſepheus tells us, that there were no leſs than a thouſand in each courſe,) there were ſeveral parts of the prieſtly office (whereof burning of incenſe was one) which the courſe that then miniſtered ſeems to have divided among themſelves for the week that they were to attend, by lot; *Pool's and Whitby's Annotations*.

‡ A Jewiſh congregation, for the moſt part conſiſted of all the prieſts of the courſe which was then in waiting, of the Levites, and of certain ſtationary men, (as they called them,) who repreſented the body of the people beſides ſome other accidental worſhippers; and, when the prieſt went into the ſanctuary, or within the firſt veil, to offer incenſe, notice was given by the ſound of a bell, that it was then the time of prayer; whereupon every one preſent offered up his ſupplications to God ſilently: And though this ſilent prayer was not commanded, yet there ſeems a manifeſt alluſion to it in thoſe words of St John, where, *at the offering of incenſe with the prayers of the ſaints*, it is ſaid, *there was ſilence in heaven for half an hour*. Rev. viii. 1. &c. Nor is that paſſage in Eccleſiaſticus, chap. l. 19, 20. any bad representation of this part of the Jewiſh worſhip: *And the people beſought the Lord, the moſt high, by prayer before him, that is merciful, till the ſolemnity of the Lord was ended; and then he went down* (viz. Simon the high-prieſt) *and liſted up his hands*  
over

offering up their supplications in the court that was called *the court of Israel*. At the altar of incense \* he was greatly surprised with the sight of an angel standing on the right-side of it; but the angel soon dissipated his fears with the joyful news, that God intended to bless him with a son, (whose name should be *Jahn*;) who would prove a person of uncommon merit, and be appointed to the office of harbinger † to the Messiah, who, in a short time, was to make his appearance.

K k 2

The  
8. Mark iii,  
13 Luke  
vi, 1.

over the whole congregation of the children of Israel, to give the blessing of the Lord with his lips; Hammond's and Whitby's Annotations

\* The Jews had a peculiar notion, that such like apparitions were always fatal to those that had them. and a sure token of their instantaneous death, Gen xvi. 7 xxii 11. 15. Exod. xx. 19. &c.; but if this were not, it is natural for men to be affrightened at sudden and unusual things, especially at any divine appearances, whether of God himself taking a visible shape, or authorising an angel so to do. For though God does not make the appearances to affrighten us, yet such is the imbecillity of our nature. that we cannot but be startled at them; and reason good there is, that God, by this means, should both declare his own glory and majesty, and humble his poor creatures, in order to make them more susceptible of his divine revelations; *Pool's Annotations*; and *Calmet's Dictionary*.

† This word is derived from the Hebrew *Masbach*. to anoint, and is the very same with *Xpīstos*, the anointed in Greek. It is a name sometimes given to the kings and high-priests of the Hebrews, 1 Sam. xii. 5. &c. Psal. cv. 15.; but principally, and by way of eminence it belongs to that sovereign deliverer who was expected by the Jews, and whom they vainly expect even to this day, since he is already come at the appointed time, in the person of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. The Jews were used to anoint kings, high priests, and sometimes prophets. Saul, David, Solomon, and Joash, kings of Judah, received the royal unction. Aaron and his sons received the sacerdotal; and Elisha received the prophetical, at least God ordered Elijah to give it to him. But now, though Jesus Christ united in his own person all the offices of prophet, priest, and king yet we no where find, that he received any outward or sensible unction; and therefore the unction which the prophets and apostles speak of, with regard to him, is the spiritual and internal unction of grace in the Holy Ghost, of which the outward unction was no more than a figure and symbol; *Calmet's Dictionary*.



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spels to  
Matt. ix. 8  
Mark ii. 23.  
Luke vi. 1.

The sense of his own great age, as well as his wife's long sterility, made Zacharias \* express a kind of diffidence in this promise, and, for his farther satisfaction, desire some miracle in confirmation of it; Whereupon the angel let him know, 'That he was no less than Gabriel, a special attendant on God's throne, and dispatched on purpose to inform him of this great happiness; but that, since he was so incredulous as to require a sign, he should have such an one as would be both a punishment of his unbelief, and confirmation of his faith; for, until the birth of the child, he should be both deaf and dumb;' which accordingly came to pass: For, when he came out to the people, (who waited to receive his benediction,) he made signs, that he was not able to speak to them, and they thence inferred, that he

\* The words of Zacharias to the angel are, *Whereby shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife well stricken in years?* Luke i. 18. much of the same import with those of Abraham upon a like occasion, *Whereby shall I know that I shall inherit the land of Canaan?* Gen. xv. 8. How then came it to pass, that Abraham was gratified with a sign in the same request for which Zacharias was punished with dumbness? Now, though there may be a very great similitude in the words which are spoken by several persons, yet there may, at the same time, be a very considerable difference in the heart and habit of mind from whence they proceed, which, we must allow, God can see much better than we can perceive by words. In relation to Abraham, then, the Holy Spirit bears him testimony, that *he staggered not at the promise through unbelief, but was strong in faith, giving glory to God, being fully persuaded, that what he had promised, he was able to perform,* Rom. iv. 19. 20. &c.; and therefore if he asked a sign, it was not to beget, but to nourish and confirm, this faith in him. But in Zacharias, the asking of a sign favoured of perfect infidelity, in that he believed not an angel appearing to him in the name of the Lord, and in a place where evil angels durst not come: An angel telling him his prayer was heard, which evil angels could not know; and acquainting him with things which tended to the glory of God; the completion of his promises, and the welfare of mankind, which evil angels would not do. His punishment therefore was the just result of his unbelief; but (what shews the mercy of God in inflicting it) it was a punishment of such a nature, as carried with it an answer to his desire, being no more than a privation of speech, until the words of the angel were fulfilled; *Pool's and Whitby's Annotations.*

<sup>a</sup> Numb. vi. 24.





# NAZARETH.

*A. House & Shop of Joseph. B. Temple. Synagogue C. Monastery*

*See page 442*



# SIDON.

*Gavin. sculp.*

*Engraved for W. Stackhouses History of the Bible.*



he had seen some extraordinary vision within. After the time of his ministration however was over, he returned home, and it was not long before his wife Elizabeth perceived herself with child, though her modesty made her conceal it for the space of five months.

Six months after Elifabeth's conception, the same angel Gabriel \* was sent to Nazareth, a city of Galilee, to a virgin, named † Mary, (a near relation to Elifabeth,

A. M.  
3999. &c.  
Ant. Chris.  
1, &c.  
aut. Jer.  
Vulg. 5.  
from the  
beginning  
of the Go-  
spels to  
Matt. ix. 8.  
and Mark ii. 23.  
Luke vi. 1.

\* Nazareth was a city of the Lower Galilee, situated in the south part of that province, and so not far from the confines of Samaria, to the south, and nearer to the territories of Tyre and Sydon, to the north west. According to Mr Maundrell's account in his journey from Aleppo, it is at present only an inconsiderable village, lying in a kind of round concave valley, on the top of an high hill. Here is a convent built over what is said to be the place of the annunciation, or where the blessed virgin received the joyful message brought her by the angel. It is built over the place, I say; because the chamber where she received the angel's salutation, was, above four hundred and fifty years ago, removed from Nazareth, and, according to the Roman legends, transported by angels to Loretto, then a small village in the Pope's dominions, but now become a city and bishop's see. Here is likewise the house of Joseph, the very same (as the friars of the convent tell you) wherein the son of God lived for near thirty years in subjection to a man; and not far distant from hence, they shew you the synagogue wherein our blessed Saviour preached that sermon (Luke iv. 16.) whereby his countrymen were so exasperated, that they rose up, and thrust him out of the city, and led him to the brow of the hill, whereon their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong, Luke iv. 28. 29. for which reason that brow is to this day called *the Mountain of precipitation*; — *Well's Geography of the New Testament.*

† In our translation, the words in the text run thus, — *To a virgin, espoused to a man, whose name was Joseph, of the house of David*; but, in my opinion, they might better be placed in this manner, — *To a virgin of the house of David, espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, and the virgin's name was Mary*; because this agrees better with the words of the angel, *The Lord shall give him the throne of his father David*. For since the angel had plainly told the virgin, that she should have this child without the knowledge of any man, it was not Joseph's, but Mary's being of the house of David, that made David his father. Of her immediate parents, however, the Scripture tells us nothing, not so much as their names; but from tradition we learn, that she was the daughter of Joachim and Anna, of the royal tribe of Judah, and yet related to the race of Aaron,

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Ant. Chriſt  
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Vulg. 5.  
from the  
beginning  
of the Go  
ſpels to  
Matt. ix 8.  
Mark 1. 13  
Luke vi. 1

and of the houſe of David) who had lately been † eſpouſed to one Joſeph, a perſon of the ſame pedigree indeed, but of

Aaron, becauſe Eliſabeth, the wife of Zacharias, was her couſin — *Whitby's Annotations*; and *Calmet's Dictionary*, under the word.

† Eſpouſing or betrothing was nothing elſe but a ſolemn promiſe of Marriage, made by two perſons each to other, at ſuch a diſtance of time as they agreed upon. The manner of performing this eſpouſal was either by a writing, or by a piece of ſilver given to the bride, or by cohabitation. The writing

that was prepared on theſe occaſions ran in this form — On ſuch a day of ſuch a month, in ſuch a year, A, the ſon of A, has ſaid to B, the daughter of B, *Be thou my ſpouſe according to the law of Moſes, and the Iſraelites and I will give thee for the portion of thy virginity, the ſum of two hundred zuzims, as it is ordained by the law.* And the ſaid B has conſented to become his ſpouſe upon theſe conditions, which the ſaid A has promiſed to perform upon the day of marriage. To this the ſaid A obliges himſelf; and for this he engages all his goods, even as far as the cloak which he wears upon his ſhoulders. Moreover, he promiſes to perform all that is intended in contracts of marriage, in favour of the Iſraelitiſh women. Witneſſes, A, B, C. The promiſe by a piece of ſilver, and without writing, was made before witneſſes, when the young man ſaid to his miſtreſs, 'Receive this piece of ſilver as a pledge that you ſhall become my ſpouſe' Laſtly, The engagement by cohabitation (according to the Rabbins) was allowed by law, Deut. xxiv. 1.; but it had been wiſely forbidden by the ancients becauſe of the abuſes that might happen, and to prevent the inconveniencies of clandestine marriages. After ſuch eſpouſal was made (which was generally when the parties were young) the woman continued with her parents ſeveral months, if not ſome years, (at leaſt till ſhe was arrived at the age of puberty) before ſhe was brought home, and her marriage conſummed: For ſo we find, that Samſon's wife remained with her parents a conſiderable time after eſpouſal, Judg. xiv. 8 and that the bleſſed virgin was diſcernibly with child before ſhe and her intended huſband came together Matt. i. 18 Whether this method of betrothing was at firſt ordained, or only approved by God, Deut. xx. 7. or whether it be now of any obligation to us Chriſtians, we ſhall not pretend to determine It is certain, that it has nothing that is typical nothing of the carnal ordinance in it, but ſomething very proper and convenient: viz. that the parties contracted may have ſome intermediate time to think ſeriouſly of the great change they are going to make in their conditions; to diſcourſe more freely together about their domeſtic affairs; and to implore God's bleſſing and protection

of no higher profession than that of a carpenter. The angel, approaching the pious maid, began to congratulate her with 'being highly in the favour of God, and blessed above all the rest of her sex; because she should have the happiness of bearing a son, called by the name of *Jesus* \* or *Saviour*, the long expected Messiah, to whom God would give the throne of his father David †, and of whose sovereignty and dominion there should be no end.'

Conscious of her own virtue, and yet surprised at this uncommon appearance and salutation, the Holy Virgin

over them and theirs, in all the changes and chances of this mortal life. *Pool's Annotations*; and *Calmet's Dictionary*, under the word *Marriage*.

\* We read but of few instances in Scripture, where men had names determined for them by particular appointment from heaven, and before the time of their birth; and, as such names appear to be very significant so the persons distinguished by them were always remarkable for some extraordinary qualities or events, which their respective names were designed to denote. Our Lord's name indeed, in sense and substance, is the same with Joshua, that famous leader heretofore, who, after the death of Moses, settled the Israelites in the promised land, and subdued the enemies that opposed their entrance into it. But, as that earthly, was a figure of the heavenly Canaan, so was the captain of that an eminent type of our salvation; and, if he was worthy to be called a Saviour, much more is this Jesus what his name imports; for he delivers us from the heaviest of all bondages, and from the most formidable of all enemies, as he, and he only it is, who saves his people from their sins; *Stanhope, on the epistles and gospels, vol. 1.*

† The prophets, in their predictions, are very full and express, that the Messiah should be a great king, and descend from the line of David; vid. Psal. x. 16; Isaiah ix. 6, 7.; Dan. vii. 14.; and Ezek. xxvi. 7.; and therefore the angel, in his message to Mary, characterizes him, as a successor to that prince's throne, and seems to accommodate himself, in some measure, to the prejudices of the Jews, and perhaps of the virgin-mother herself, who, being bred up in the synagogue, might expect that the Messiah should be a temporal prince, as well as they: But our Lord's kingdom (as himself plainly declares) is not of this world, nor of the like nature with other empires upon earth. His reign is in the hearts and minds of men; and his dominion is in the church, against which, *the gates of hell shall not prevail* and in which, *of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, Isa. ix. 7. until the end cometh, when he shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father, 1 Cor. xv. 24.; Calmet's Commentary.*

A. M.  
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1, &c.  
aut. A.  
Vulg. 5.  
from the  
beginning  
of the Go-  
spels to  
Matt. ix. 8.  
Mark ii. 23.  
Luke vi. 1.



A. M. 4001, &c.  
Ant. Chriſt.  
1, &c.  
ant. Ær.  
Vulg. 3.  
from the  
beginning  
of the Co-  
ſpels to  
Matt. ix. 8.

Virgin\* began to expoſtulate with the heavenly meſſenger the poſſibility of the thing, ſince ſhe had all along lived in a ſtrict ſtate of virginity †. But the angel, to ſatisfy her in this particular, told her, ‘ That this wonderful work was to be effected by the inviſible power and operation of the Holy Ghoſt ‡; and, to ſhew her that nothing was

\* The words of her expoſtulation are, *How ſhall this be, ſeeing I know not a man?* Which ſome look upon as no more than a reply of admiration, and a deſire to be further informed in

what manner God intended to effect ſuch a wonderful work; though others perceive in them ſome ſmall indications of diffidence, but what might be more excuſable, becauſe there had been no ſuch precedent of the divine power made in the world, as to cauſe a virgin to conceive, and bring forth a ſon; *Pool’s Annotations.*

† Some are of opinion, that Mary, very early in her life, had made a vow of perpetual chaſtity, and that Joſeph was appointed her huſband, not to live with her in the ordinary uſe of marriage, but merely to be the guardian of her virginity: But beſides that no vows of perpetual virginity were ever in uſe among the Jews, it can hardly be ſuppoſed, that a Jewiſh woman, in whom barrenneſs was reputed a reproach, and looked upon as a curſe, would be ever induced to make one. Among the precepts of the law, the Jewiſh doctors account matrimony to be one, Gen. i. 28 from which none are exempted, but they who devote themſelves wholly to the ſtudy of the law: But, ſince this was not the Bleſſed Virgin’s caſe, it reflects a diſhonour upon her memory to imagine, that after ſhe had entered into ſuch a vow, ſhe ſhould admit of an eſpouſal to Joſeph, which could be for no other end, but merely to mock him; *Pool’s and Whitby’s Annotations.*

‡ The words in the text are, *the Holy Ghoſt ſhall come upon thee, and the Power of the Higheſt ſhall overſhadow thee*; wherein, according to the uſual modeſty of Scripture-language, is implied all that action of the Holy Ghoſt whereby the Bleſſed Virgin was enabled to become fruitful, and the place of ordinary generation was in this caſe ſupplied. Now, when this action is in Scripture repreſented as entirely the work of God, and yet is attributed to the Holy Ghoſt in particular, we are not to underſtand it ſo peculiarly his, that the two other perſons, ſubſiſting in the Godhead, ſhould have no concern in it: For here that rule of the ſchool takes place, that the entire union of the divine nature makes all ſuch actions common to all the three as do not refer to the properties and relations by which they ſtand diſtinguiſhed from each other. As therefore the Holy Spirit began the firſt creation by moving (or brooding as it were) upon the face of the waters, ſo did he here begin the

' was impossible to the Almighty, gave her to understand  
' that her cousin Elizabeth (notwithstanding her old age,  
' and former sterility) had been now six months with  
' child : ' Whereupon the Holy Virgin humbly acquiesced  
in whatever God had determined to do with her; and, as  
soon as the angel was departed, made preparations for her  
journey to Hebron \*, where her cousin Elizabeth lived.

As soon as she arrived at Zacharias's house, Elizabeth,  
upon hearing her first salutation, perceived that the child †  
sprang in her womb, and, being inspired with the Holy  
Ghost, she cried out, *Blessed art thou above thy sex ! Blessed  
is the fruit of thy body ! and how vast is my felicity to be visited  
by the mother of my Lord !* And having, by the same prophetic

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spels to  
Matth. ix.  
8. Mark ii.  
23, Luke  
vi. 1.  
  
Luke i. 39.

new creation, by conveying a principle, or power of fruitfulness, into a person otherwise incapable of it : And yet, as there, without the Father, and his divine Word or Son, *not any thing was, made that was made*, John i. 3. so did he here bring this second, *this creation of a new thing*, Jer. xxxi. 22, to effect, by the same co-operation of the whole undivided Trinity, as he had done the former ; *Stanhope on the epistles and gospels, vol. 1.*

\* This very probably was the place where Zacharias and Elizabeth lived, and where John the Baptist was born ; because it was not only one of the cities appointed for the priests to dwell in, Josh. xx. 7. but situated likewise in mountains, which running cross the middle of Judea from south to north, gave the tract which they run along, the name of the *hill-country*. Hebron was ten leagues distant from Jerusalem, and about forty from Nazareth, which made it a long journey for the Blessed Virgin, had not her zeal to go and partake in her cousin's joy (more than to satisfy her curiosity, whether what the angel had told her was true) made her surmount all difficulties ; *Well's Geography of the New Testament ; and Calmet's Commentary.*

† It is said indeed of the Baptist, that he *should be filled with the Holy Ghost from his mother's womb* ; and from hence some have thought, that this extraordinary motion of the child in Elizabeth was an act of his own, and proceeded from a sensation of joy, which himself felt at the salutation of the Blessed Virgin : But, besides that *being filled with the Holy Ghost from his mother's womb*, means no more, than that the power of the Holy Ghost should be discerned to be upon him very early, it is certain, that infants in the womb are not capable of any joy themselves, as having no apprehensions of good to be enjoyed, or evil to be avoided ; but, as they are sensibly affected with the joy, or grief, or surprise of the parent, to whom they are united, the uncommon motion of the child, at this conjuncture

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fpels to  
Matt. ix. 8  
Mark ii. 23.  
Luke vi. 1.

phetic ſpirit, affured Mary of the accompliſhment of every thing that the angel had told her, ſhe ſo tranſported the Bleſſed Virgin, that ſhe broke out into a rapture of thankſgiving \* to God, wherein ſhe recounted his mercies, and the promiſes which he had made to the people of Iſrael, and which, by making her the bleſſed inſtrument of them, he was now about to fulfil.

About three months Mary continued with her couſin Elizabeth, and then returned home. Elizabeth, not long after, was delivered of a ſon; but, on the eighth day †, when the child was to be circumciſed and named, his relations and friends were not a little ſurpriſed to hear that he was to be called *John* ‡, ſince none of the family bore that name; but their ſurpriſe became much greater, when they found that, upon this occaſion, his father's ſpeech was immediately reſtored to him, which he employed in the praiſes of Almighty God, who had wrought ſuch prodigies among them.

The

ture, muſt be occaſioned by the joy which tranſported his mother; *Hammond's* and *Whitby's Annotations*.

\* It was customary among the Jews, for pious and devout perſons, when they found themſelves inſpired, upon great and ſolemn occaſions, to celebrate the praiſes of God in ſongs made on purpoſe. Several of this kind we meet with in the Old Teſtament; but this of the Bleſſed Virgin is the firſt that occurs in the New, and, for the majeſty of its ſtyle, the nobleneſs of its ſentiments, and that ſpirit of piety which runs through the whole, is inferior to none; *Calmet's Commentary*.

† The Jews had a poſitive command in their law, that no child ſhould be circumciſed before the eighth day; becauſe the mother, for ſeven days, was reputed unclean, and ſo was the child by touching her, Levit. xii. 1 2.: but the law appointed no certain place in which circumciſion was to be done, nor any certain perſon that was to perform it; neither did it enjoin, that the child ſhould have his name given him at that time, only the cuſtom prevailed of doing it then; becauſe when God inſtituted the rite, he changed the names of Abraham and Sarah: *Whitby's Annotations*.

‡ The Jews, from their firſt beginning, ſeem to have made it a point of religion, to give ſuch names to their children as were ſignificative either of God's mercy to them, or of their duty to God, and from the paſſage now before us, (though it was no ancient uſage,) it ſeems to be a cuſtom introduced at leaſt in the days of Zacharias, to call children by the name of their parents, or the neareſt relations, (as it is uſual now among us,) if there was no particular reaſon to the contrary; *Pool's Annotations*; and *Calmet's Commentary*.



The Holy Virgin being returned to Nazareth, still concealed the mystery which God had wrought in her, from her espoused husband; but her pregnant symptoms soon discovered it; and though her deportment had been extremely chaste and modest, yet he might be well assured that she was with child. This raised no little concern in his breast; but, being a merciful good man \*, and unwilling either to expose the honour of her family, which he thought she had stained, or to inflict public punishment upon her, according to the sentence of the law, he resolved

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beginning  
of the Go-  
sels to  
Matt. ix 8.  
Mark ii 23.  
Luke vi. 1.

Mat. i. 18.

\* The words in the text, as we translate them, are.—*Joseph her husband being a just man*: But. if he was a just man, and was satisfied that his intended wife had, some way or other, violated her chastity, (as he knew nothing to the contrary at that time,) instead of screening her crime, he ought to have brought her to punishment, Deut. xxii. 20. 21. Now, it is to be observed, that upon the discovery of his wife's pregnancy, Joseph had the choice of three things, 1<sup>st</sup>. Either he might (notwithstanding this,) have taken her to his house as his wife, because the law of divorce laid none under an obligation, but gave a permission only. (in case of some discovered uncleanness.) to put away the wife. Or, 2<sup>dly</sup>. He might give her a bill of divorcement, either in public or in private. (for that was left to his opinion,) either before two or three witnesses or before a proper magistrate, and that without specifying any crime against her: Or, 3<sup>dly</sup>, He might, according to the law, have brought her upon her trial, whether in the matter of her pregnancy, she had suffered a rape, or was herself consenting, Deut. xxii. 23. 24. Had therefore Joseph done the first of these, he must have acted counter to his own honour, and have incurred the common reproach, that he *who retaineth an adulteress is a fool*. Had he done the last of these, he was not sure of convicting her, because, upon examination, it might appear, that she had been forced; and, in that case, the man that did it was to die. Deut. xxii. 25.; or she might have been with child before her betrothing, and, in that case, she was only obliged to marry the person that had abused her, ver. 28. 29. Upon the whole, therefore, Joseph thought it the best and justest way to proceed upon the foot of a divorce. Mary's being visibly with child was reason sufficient to authorize his parting with her; but he did not know for certain that she was guilty of adultery, or that consequently she deserved to die; and therefore he did not think it right, by bringing her upon her trial, to expose her; *Pool's Annotations*; and *Calmet's Commentary*; and *Spanheim's Dub. evang. part 1. dub. 31.*

\* Deut. xxii. 23.

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of the Go  
ſpels to  
Matt. ix. 8.  
Mark 1. 13  
Luke vi. 1.

resolved upon a separation \* with the utmoſt privacy : But before he came to put it in execution, an angel from heaven † appeared to him in a viſion, informing him, ' That his wife's conception was the immediate work of ' the

\* The common way of ſeparation among the Jews was, by the man's giving the woman a letter of divorce. This, in their language, is called *Gbeth*, and the ſubſtance of it is to this effect.—' On ſuch a day, month, and year, and at ſuch a place, ' I A divorce you voluntarily, put you away, and reſtore you ' to your liberty, even you B, who was heretofore my wife ; ' and I permit you to marry whom you pleaſe.' When the day of divorce comes, the Rabbi that attends, having ſtrictly examined both parties, and finding that they are reſolved to part, bids the woman open her hands, and, when ſhe has received the deed, to cloſe them both together, leſt it ſhould chance to fall to the ground. The man, when he gives her the parchment, (for on parchment the bill of divorce was to be wrote, in the preſence of two Rabbins, and with many other trifling circumſtances,) tells her, ' Here is thy divorce. ' I put thee away from me, and leave thee at liberty to marry ' whom thou pleaſeſt ;' and, when the woman has taken it, and the Rabbi read it over once more, ſhe is entirely free — There is in this ceremony, however, to be remarked, that they always endeavour to have ten or twelve perſons at it, beſides the two witneſſes who ſign the deed. When therefore Joſeph intended to diſmiſs Mary privately, it could not be, by having no witneſſes at all, but as few as the nature of the thing would bear, and by giving her the letter of divorcement into her own hand, which ſhe might ſuppreſs, if ſhe thought fit, or by inserting no accusation againſt her in it, in caſe it came to be read before the company ; *Calmet's Dictionary* under the word *Divorce* ; *Whitby* and *Beauſaber's Annotations*.

† This viſion was in a dream, and while he was aſleep ; and dreams, we know, were one way whereby God revealed his mind to the people formerly, Job vii. 14. whereby he made himſelf known to his prophets, Numb. xii. 6. and not to prophets only, but to Pagan princes ſometimes, as appears by the inſtances, both of Pharaoh and Nebuchadnezzar, Gen. xli. 1. Dan. ii. 1. But how to diſtinguiſh divine from natural dreams, it is difficult to ſay, unleſs it be by the clear and diſtinct ſeries of their representation, and the forcible impreſſion which they leave upon men's ſpirits ; whereas natural dreams, for the moſt part, are rambling and inconfiſtent, and ' whoſo regardeth them, (ſays the wiſe ſon of Sirach,) is like him who ' catcheth at a ſhadow, or followeth after the wind ;' Ecclus. xxxiv. 2. ; *Pool's Annotations*. Why God reveals himſelf by dreams, and in the night-time ; *vid. Spanheim's Dub. evang. part 2. dub. 59.*

‘ the Holy Ghost, and that she should bear a son, the  
 ‘ same person ‘ whom the prophet had foretold under the  
 ‘ name of *Emanuel*, or *God with us* :’ Whereupon Joseph  
 was not disobedient to the heavenly vision, but taking  
 the Holy Virgin home to him, he lived with her, to all  
 outward appearance, in conjugal love, though he cer-  
 tainly had no carnal knowledge of her, \* till she was  
 delivered

A. M.  
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 Ant. Chris.  
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 aut Ær.  
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 from the  
 beginning  
 of the Go-  
 spels to  
 Matth. ix.  
 8. Mark ii.  
 13. Luke  
 vi. 1.

‘ *Isaiah ix. 6.*—\* The word *first-born*, in Scripture, admits of  
 various significations. Sometimes (and most commonly indeed)  
 it denotes the eldest of two or more children as Eliab is called  
 the *first-born* of Jesse, 1 Sam. xvii. 13. ; at others, the first that  
 is born without regard to any else, as when God says to Mo-  
 ses, *sanctify me all the first-born*, Exod. xiii. 2. In some places it im-  
 ports figuratively what is most dearly beloved by us: in which  
 sense God frequently calls the Israelites his *first-born*; and in  
 others, what is most remarkable for greatness or excellency, as  
 God promises David (who was but a younger brother of the  
 family) to *make him the first born of the kings of the earth*. Ps. lxxxix.  
 27. In any of these three last senses our Saviour might very  
 properly be called his mother’s *first-born* son, for as much as he  
 was really her first child; her most and only beloved; and the  
 most illustrious of his race: But then Joseph’s not knowing his  
 wife until she was delivered of her first-born son, seems to im-  
 ply, that he knew her afterwards. Those who maintain the  
 perpetual virginity of the Blessed mother, tells us, that *et c.*,  
 which we render *until* in several places of Scripture, has rela-  
 tion only to the time which precedes, and not to that which fol-  
 lows, any event; so that *he knew her not until*, may be taken in  
 the same sense as Samuel *came not to see Saul till the day of his*  
*death*, 1 Sam. xv. 35 *i. e.* he never came to see him: But,  
 (besides that most of the passages, which are produced to this  
 purpose, are far from coming up to the case in hand,) since the  
 angel commanded *Joseph to take Mary as his wife*, without any  
 intimation that he should not perform the duty of an husband  
 to her, it is not easy to conceive why he should live twelve years  
 with her, and all that while deny that duty which both the law  
 and the canons of the Jews command the husband to pay his  
 wife, Exod. xxi. 10. If we imagine, that our Saviour would  
 have been dishonoured in any other’s lying in the same bed af-  
 ter him, we seem to forget how much he humbled and debased  
 himself in lying in that bed first, and then in a stable and a  
 manger. But, leaving this question to those who affect to be  
 curious beyond what is written, we may safely conclude with  
 St. Basil,—‘ That though it was necessary for the completion  
 ‘ of the prophecy, that the mother of our Lord should continue  
 ‘ a virgin, until she had brought forth her first-born; yet what  
 ‘ she was afterwards, it is idle to discuss, because it is of no man-





there to have their names and estates inrolled. The great A M.  
 conflux of people upon this occasion had already filled all 3999, &c.  
 the inns \*, and houses of reception, so that no better Ant. Chris.  
 place could be found for their lodging than a stable, where 1, &c.  
 they had not been long, before the blessed Virgin was del. aut. Ær.  
 ivered of a son, whom (herself performing the office of a Vulg. 5.  
 midwife †) she bound in swaddling clothes, and laid down from the  
 to rest in a manger. But, notwithstanding this obscurity beginning  
 of our Saviour's birth, God was pleased, that very night, of the Go-  
 by the message of an angel, with a radiant light surround- speis to  
 ing him, to make a pompous revelation of it to certain Matt. ix. 8.  
 poor shepherds, who were attending their flocks on the Mark ii. 23  
 plains of Bethlehem; and, after one angel had delivered Luke vi. 1.  
 the joyful tidings, an innumerable company of the same  
 celestial choir broke out all together into this triumphant  
 doxology, *Glory be to God on high, peace on earth, and good-*  
*will towards men.*

A. M. 4001, &c.  
 Ann Dom.  
 1, &c.  
 aut. Ær.  
 Vulg. 3.  
 His mani-  
 festation to  
 the shep-  
 herds, old  
 Simeon and  
 Anna,

their flocks when they received the glad tidings of the birth  
 of CHRIST and not far from the field, the village where they  
 dwelt; *Whitby's Annotations; Calmet's Commentary; and Wells's*  
*Geography of the New Testament.*

The inns in the east are, even to this day, large square  
 buildings, but generally no more than one story high, with a  
 spacious court in the middle of them. Into this court you en-  
 ter in at a wide gate, and on right and left hand, meet with  
 rooms that are appointed for travellers to lodge in. Those that  
 come first, take the rooms they like best, but must be mindful  
 to provide themselves both with bedding and victuals, because  
 the rooms are perfectly naked, and have no furniture in them.  
 It is some comfort however, that for this lodging (such as it is)  
 you will pay nothing, only a small toll to the town as you pass  
 along; and have no reason to fear the loss of any thing you  
 bring with you, because the master of the inn takes great care  
 of the gate at night, and is indeed responsible for the safety of  
 whatever baggage you carry into your lodging; *Calmet's Com-*  
*mentary.*

† Which she could not have done, to be sure, had she been  
 delivered in the common manner of other women: But it was  
 always the opinion of the church, from the days of Gregory  
 Naziazan until now, (though before his days there were some  
 opinions to the contrary,) that, as there was no sin in the con-  
 ception, so neither had the Virgin any pains in the produc-  
 tion; for to her alone the punishment of Eve, that *in sorrow*  
*she should bring forth children*, did not extend; because, where  
 nothing of sin was the ingredient, there nothing of misery could  
 cohabit; *Taylor's life of Christ.*

A. M.  
4001, &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
1, &c.  
aut Ær  
Vulg. 3.  
from the  
beginning  
of the G.  
spels to  
Matt. ix 8  
Mark ii. 23  
Luke vi. 1.

No sooner was this heavenly concert ended, but the overjoyed shepherds, remembering the signs which the angel, before he disappeared, had given them, immediately hastened to Bethlehem, where they found the Virgin-mother, and Joseph the supposed father, attending the God-like babe, whom, in humble reverence, they adored, and then returned, praising and extolling the mercies of God, and, to the great amazement of all that heard them, publishing in all places what they knew concerning this child. As soon as the child was eight days old, his parents had him circumcised \* according to the law; when, pursuant to the order which the angel had given before his conception, they called his name *Jesus*; and, as soon as he was forty days old, two other ceremonies were performed, viz. the purification † of his mother, and the presentation

\* Our blessed Lord, as he was the supreme lawgiver of the world, was not in strictness bound to the observation of his own law, nor did he stand in any need of circumcision, considered as a remedy against original sin; because, in his incarnation, he contracted no pollution; but, as he was *made of a woman, made under the law, and came* (as himself testifies, Matth iii. 15.) *to fulfil all righteousness*, it became him to receive the character which distinguished the Jews from all other nations. Among the Jews, indeed, it was thought a reproach to keep company with persons that were not circumcised: *Thou wentest in to men uncircumcised, and didst eat with them*, is the accusation which they brought against St Peter, Acts xi. 3.; and therefore, as our Lord was sent chiefly to the lost sheep of Israel, he could not have been qualified for their acceptance and free conversation had he not submitted to this ordinance. Of him was that most glorious of all the promises made to Abraham intended, *In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed*. Gal iii. 16. And therefore fit it was, that he should have the seal or testimony of circumcision, in order to shew, that he was truly and rightly descended of that ancestor: And, as he was come to be the Mediator of a new and better covenant, it was but decent that the former should recede with honour, and that it might do so, himself should approve of a sacrament, which was both of divine institution, and a means of admission into that former covenant; *Pool's Annotations*; and *Stanhope on the epistles and gospels. vol 1.*

† The law concerning the purification of women, we have in the 12th chapter of Leviticus, wherein it is ordained, that a woman, after bearing of children, should continue for a certain number of days, in a state which the law termed *unclean*.

For



sentation of her first-born. Tho' therefore her son's immaculate conception needed not that ceremony; yet the holy Virgin went up with Joseph to Jerusalem, there to offer the sacrifice \* prescribed by the law for her own purification, and there to present her son to the Lord, by delivering him into the priest's hands, and redeeming him again for five shekels. But, while she was in the temple performing this, old Simeon † (who had long waited for the redemption

A. M.  
4001, &c.  
Ann Dom  
1, &c.  
but Ar.  
Vulg. 3.  
from the  
beginning  
of the Go-  
sp. is to  
Matth. ix.  
8. Mark ii.

For the seven first days, all conversation or contact polluted them that approached her, and for three and thirty days more, (which in all amounted to forty,) she was still (though in an inferior degree) reputed unclean; but, at the expiration of this term, if her child was a son, (for the time was double for a daughter,) she was commanded to bring a burnt-offering, and a sin-offering, which wiped out the stain which the law laid upon her, and restored her to all the purity and privileges she had before. Now, though the miraculous conception of the blessed Virgin set her quite above any obligation to the law of impurity, yet, since her being a mother was sufficiently notorious, though the manner of her being so was a secret; it was fit that she should submit, as the known mother of a son, to the ceremonies expected from her. Her sin offering was not indeed due in any sense; but she lay under the same legal incapacity in the eye of the world as other women did, and was to be restored to the temple by it. Her burnt-offering was not due, as that of other parents is to commemorate a deliverance from pangs and danger; but never sure were thanks so justly due for any son as this; never from any mother as from her, who had the honour to bring forth her own, and the world's Saviour, the blessing and expectation of all the earth. As therefore he was circumcised in his own person, though the mystical and moral part of circumcision had nothing to do with him; so his mother submitted to all the purifications of any other Israelitish woman, though she partook not in any degree of the infirmities and pollutions common to other births; *Stanhope on the epistles and gospels, vol. 4.*

\* What the blessed Virgin offered, we read, was a pair of turtles, which being the oblation appointed only for the meaner sort of people, Lev. xii. 6, 8. discovers the poverty of Joseph and Mary, that they could not reach to a lamb of the first year, the offering which they who had ability were obliged to make; *Waltby's Annotations.*

† Some are of opinion, that this Simeon was the son and successor of Hillel a very famous doctor in the Jewish church before our Saviour's time, and that he was either the father or master of Gamaliel, at whose feet St Paul was educated. But

A. M.  
4001, &c.  
Ann Dom  
1, &c  
aut æt.  
Vulg. 3  
from the  
beginning  
of the Go-  
spels to  
Math ix.  
8. Mark ii.  
23. Luke  
vi. 1.

demption of Israel, and had been promised, by the mouth of heaven, that he should not leave this world, before he had seen the illustrious person who was to affect it) came in, and taking the blessed infant in his arms, in an heavenly ecstacy praised God for the completion of his purposes, in letting him live to see the Saviour of the world, before he quitted it. And no sooner had he ended his divine rapture, but an ancient widow of the tribe of Aser, whose name was Anna, and whose piety and devotion, severity of life, and constant frequentation of the public worship, were very remarkable, coming into the temple, and being herself likewise excited by a prophetic spirit, gave God thanks for his infinite mercies; testifying that this child was the true Messiah, and declaring the same to all such devout persons in Jerusalem as waited for his coming.

Matt. ii. 1.  
and to the  
wisemen of  
the east.

After these legal performances, and solemn testimonies in favour of the child, Joseph and Mary returned to Bethlehem †, where, in a very short time, they were visited

(besides that, we can hardly suppose, how a person of this note could make so public a declaration in favour of our Lord, and yet no more notice be taken of it) if we look into the several revelations, which God at this time was pleased to give of his Son, we shall find, that none of them were directed to any of the Pharisees, or principal doctors of the law, but that to Joseph a carpenter, to Zacharias an ordinary priest, and to a company of poor shepherds, such discoveries were made: And therefore, it is much more reasonable to presume, that this Simeon, to whom God had revealed the time of Christ's coming, was some honest plain man, more remarkable for his piety and devotion, than any other quality or accomplishment. When he came into the temple, it is said, that among the other mothers who brought their children to be presented to the Lord, he observed the Holy Virgin all shining with rays of light, and that, putting the multitude aside, he went directly to her, gave her his blessing, took the child Jesus in his arms, and being divinely inspired, pronounced the canticle, *Nunc dimittis*. Nicephorus relates, that, as soon as he returned the child to his mother, he died; and Epiphanius adds, that the Hebrew priests refused to give him burial, because he had spoken of our Saviour with too much advantage. But these traditions may be groundless fictions; *Pool's Annotations*; *Calmet's Commentary*, and *Dictionary*, under word *Simeon*.

† The words in St Luke are, *When they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own city Nazareth*, chap. ii. 39. which must be interpreted

ed by certain strangers, coming from a far, of a rank and character somewhat extraordinary. For God, to notify the birth of his Son to the Gentiles, as well as to the Jews, caused an uncommon star to arise in the east, which some wisemen, or astronomers, in those parts observing, and understanding withal, that this was to signify the birth of the Messiah promised to the Jews, travelled to the metropolis of Judea, there enquiring after this new-born prince, that they might testify their homage and adoration of him. Their public character and appearance, and their openly calling him the *King of the Jews*, put Herod † into a great consternation, and the whole city indeed into no small commotion, as both fearing and hoping something extraordinary.

A. M.  
4001, &c.  
Ann Dom  
1, &c.  
an. Ær.  
Vulg 3.  
from the  
beginning  
of the Go-  
freer to  
Matth. ix.  
8. Mark ii.  
13. Luke  
vi. 1.

Herod however, being resolved to destroy this supposed rival in his kingdom, immediately assembled the whole body of the Sanhedrim, and demanded of them the very place where the Messiah should be born. Bethlehem, in the land assigned to the tribe of Judah (they told him) was the very spot which the Holy Spirit, by the prophet Micah,

Herod's  
murderous  
intentions  
against him  
disappoint-  
ed.

preted of some time at least after they had performed these things. For, upon supposition, that the Magians came to Bethlehem, after that Joseph and Mary had been at Jerusalem with the child, upon the child's return from thence, his parents must have taken Bethlehem in their way, and there made some small stay, (in which time we suppose that the wisemen came) before they departed to the place of their settled abode: Because the other two suppositions, *viz.* That the wise men came to Bethlehem before the presentation of the child at Jerusalem. or. that they came not till he was in the second year of his age when his parents, upon some business or other, happened to be at Bethlehem, are attended with more difficulties than can easily be surmounted; *Vid. Spanheim's Dub. evan. part 2 dub. 25, 26*

† Herod, who was naturally of a jealous and suspicious temper, knew very well. that himself was hated by the Jews, and that the Jews were then in full expectation of the Messiah (a prince that was to subdue all other nations) to come and reign over them, and had therefore great reason to fear, that this rumour of a king's being born among them, confirmed by such extraordinary means, as persons coming from a far country, and conducted to Jerusalem by the guidance of a wonderful star, might be a means to excite sedition among the people, and occasion perhaps a revolution in the government; *Calmet's Commentary.*



A. M.  
4001. &c.  
Ann Dom  
1, &c.  
aut Ær.  
Vulg. 3,  
from the  
beginning  
of the Go-  
spels to  
Matth. ix.  
8 Mark ii.  
23 Luke  
vi. 1.

cah, had marked out for this great event; which when he understood, he dismissed the assembly; and sending for the above-mentioned astronomers, with the utmost secrecy he enquired of them the exact time of the star's first appearance, and then dismissed them to Bethlehem, with orders to make diligent search for the young prince, and, when they had discovered where he was, to bring him word to Jerusalem, that he, in like manner, might go and pay him his homage: But this pretence of worshipping was no more than a cloak to his intention of killing the child.

These persons, however, having received the king's instructions, \* departed towards Bethlehem, and, in their way, were very agreeably surpris'd with a new sight of the same miraculous star they had seen in their own country, which went before them, and (like the fiery pillar in the wilderness) directed them to the very house where Jesus and his mother abode. As soon as they entered in, they fell prostrate on the ground, according to the eastern custom, and, having in this manner adored the child, † presented him with the richest products of their

\* Some, upon this occasion, are apt to wonder, why none of the Jews should have the curiosity to attend the wisemen in their journey to Bethlehem; and the reason, that is commonly assign'd for their omission in this respect, is the dread they might have of offending the tyrant under whom they lived: But, as it is highly probable, that when the wise men came to Jerusalem, they made their immediate application to court, as the most likely place where to gain intelligence of him that was born king of the Jews; and, as it is much to be question'd, whether Herod when he conven'd the doctors of the law, made any mention of the wisemen's coming, but nakedly propounded the question to them, 'Where Christ was to be born?' So there is great reason to presume that he sent them away so privately, that if any of the Jews had been courageous enough to have gone along with them, they possibly might not have had an opportunity. The greater wonder of the two therefore is, that Herod should send none in whom he could confide, to be present at the discovery of this rival prince, and to bring him word thereof, if not dispatch him: But in this, the protection and providence of God was visible; *Peel's Annotations.*

† Some of the ancients are of opinion, that in the presents which these eastern sages made, they had a mystical meaning, and design'd to signify their acknowledgment both of the divi-

nity,

their country, gold, and precious odours, more particularly frankincense and myrrh.

Having thus performed their homage and congratulations, these eastern strangers were thinking of nothing more than to return to Jerusalem, and acquaint Herod with the happy discovery they had made; but God, who knew the heart of that tyrant, prevented them by a vision that very night, which directed them into their own country another way; and, not long after, sent an angel to Joseph, to acquaint him with Herod's intended cruelty against the child, and to order him to retire into Egypt with him and his mother, and there to continue till farther notice; which Joseph instantly obeyed, and, for fear of discovery, taking the advantage of the night, with all possible speed set forward for Egypt.

In the mean time, Herod waited impatiently for the return of the eastern sages; but, at length, finding himself deluded, and his most secret and subtle designs blasted, he fell into a most violent rage and fury; and, having resolved to affect by cruelty, what he had been disappointed of doing by policy, he sent out his soldiers, and † made

A. M  
4001, &c.  
Ann. Dom  
1, &c.  
aut Ær.  
Vulg. 3.  
from the  
beginning  
of the Go-  
spels to  
Matt ix. 8.  
Mark ii.  
23; Luke  
vi. 1.

His massa-  
cring the  
children at  
Bethlehem,  
and wretch-  
ed death.

nity, royalty, and humanity of our Blessed Saviour: For the incense, say they, was proper to be given to him as a God, the gold, as a king and the myrrh, as a mortal man, whose body was to be embalmed therewith. But all this is no more than the sport of a luxuriant fancy. It is certain, that the eastern people never came into the presence of their princes without some presents, and that their presents were usually of the most choice things that their country did afford. All that they meant, therefore, was to do homage to a new-born prince of a neighbouring nation, in the best manner they could; and if what naturalists tell us be true, viz. that myrrh was only to be found in Arabia, and frankincense in Sabæa, which is part of Arabia, and that this country was not destitute of gold, 2 Chron. ix. 14 and at the same time was famous for men conversant in astronomy, this makes a very probable argument, that the wise men came from thence. But of this we shall see more hereafter; *Pool's Annotations.*

† It is thought strange by some, that Josephus, who writes the life of Herod in most of its circumstances, should make no manner of mention of the murder of these innocents: But, when it is considered that Josephus was only born in the first year of Caligula, and the thirty-seventh year of Christ: that he wrote his history of the Jewish wars (which he extracted from public records) in the fifty-sixth year of his age; and that it can scarce be supposed an action so inglorious to the memory of Herod

A. M. 4004, &c.  
Ann Dom  
1. &c.  
aut Jer.  
Vulg. 3.  
from the  
beginning  
of the Go-  
spels to  
Matth. ix.  
8. Mark ii.  
23. Luke  
vi. 1.

a bloody massacre of all the children in the city of Bethle-  
hem, and the neighbouring towns, that were \* two years  
of age, and under, including herein the whole time,  
and more, that the wise men had told him, and not doubt-  
ing, but that, in this general slaughter, he should dispatch  
the young prince whom he so much dreaded: But God  
had provided him with a safe retreat. The shrieks, how-  
ever, of tender mothers for their innocent babes, and the  
groans of expiring infants, which on this occasion, filled  
the skies, were inexpressible, and were one reason doubt-  
less, why the divine vengeance, not long after, overtook  
this tyrant, and † smote him with a strange and terrible

distemper,  
Herod as this massacre was, should be preserved in the Jewish  
records; it is not so very wonderful that he, who wrote a-  
bove ninety-three years after the fact was committed, should  
make no mention of it; nor is it very material that he did not,  
since we find Macrobius, an Heathen author, about the latter  
end of the fourth age, not forgetting to acquaint us, that,  
‘ Herod the king ordered to be slain in Syria (which, in Roman  
‘ authors, is frequently set for Judea) some children, that were  
‘ under two years old;’ though he is mistaken in the circum-  
stances of the story, when he makes Herod’s own son to be one  
of them; *Saturn. lib. 2 c. 4.*

\* Some will needs infer from hence, that this dreadful  
massacre was not committed until our Lord was almost two  
years old, because they were children of that age, and under,  
whom Herod ordered to be slain: But, besides that the word  
*διετής* may signify one who has lived one year only, and so  
the words *ἀπὸ διέτους καὶ κατωτέρω*, may be translated, *from a year  
old, and under*; Herod might possibly think, that the star did  
not appear till some considerable time after the young king’s  
birth and so (to make sure work) might be induced to slay  
all born at Bethlehem a year before, and more, even to the time  
of the star’s appearing. For he who had the heart to slay  
three of his own sons would hardly be sparing of the blood of  
other peoples children; *Whitby’s Annotations,*

† The disease of which he died, and the misery which he  
suffered under it, plainly shewed, that the hand of God was  
then, in a signal manner, upon him. For, not long after the  
murder of the infants at Bethlehem, his distemper (as Josephus  
informs us) daily increased, after an unheard of manner, and  
he himself laboured under the most loathsome and tormenting  
accidents that can be imagined. ‘ He had a lingering and wast-  
‘ ing fever, and grievous ulcers in his entrails and bowels; a  
‘ violent cholic. an insatiable appetite. venemous swelling in  
‘ his feet, convulsions in his nerves, a perpetual asthma, and  
‘ stinking breath, rottenness in his joints and privy members,  
‘ accompanied



distemper, which put an end to his wicked and brutal life. A. M. 4001, &c. Ann Dom 1, &c. aut Ær. Vulg. 3. from the beginning of the Gospel to Matth. ix. 8 Mark ii. 13. Luke vi. 1.

‘ accompanied with prodigious itchings, crawling worms, and intolerable smells, so that he was a perfect hospital of incurable diseases.’ And thus he died in horrid pain and torment, being smitten by God for his many enormous iniquities. For, setting aside some appearances of generosity and greatness, there was never a more complete tyrant than he. He suppressed and changed the high priest’s office as he thought fit, and even profaned the temple itself. He slew the legal king of the Jews, extirpated all the race of the Maccabees, destroyed the whole Sanhedrim, and substituted others in their room : Nor was his rage confined to the Jews, but descended to his own family and nearest relations, even to the executing his beloved wife Mariamne, and his own sons, Alexander and Aristobulus, upon slight and trivial occasions. So wicked a prince, as he was conscious he had been, could not (he knew) occasion any true lamentation at his death, but rather a great deal of gladness and rejoicing all the kingdom over ; and therefore to prevent this, he framed a project, which was one of the most horrid that ever entered into the mind of man. All the nobility, and most considerable men in every city, town, and village in Judea, upon pain of death, he summoned to come together to Jericho, where he was then lying sick, and, when they were come, commanded his soldiers to shut them all up in a spacious place, called the *Hippodrome* ; when having called his sister Salome and her husband Alexas, with some choice friends, he told them with tears, ‘ That he was sensible of the Jews hatred to his government and person, and that his death would be an high satisfaction to them ; that his friends therefore ought to procure him some solace in the midst of his bitter anguish, which if they performed according to his order, the mournings and lamentations at his death would be as great and magnificent as ever any prince had ; and this order was, that, on the same hour when he expired, the soldiers should surround the Hippodrome, and put all the inclosed persons to the sword, and then publish his death, which (as he said) would cause his exit to be doubly triumphant *first*, for the posthumous execution of his commands ; and *secondly* for the quality and number of his mourners.’ But Salome and Alexas, not being wicked enough to do what they had been made solemnly to promise, chose rather to break their obligation, than make themselves the executioners of so bloody a design ; and, therefore, as soon as Herod was dead, they opened the Hippodrome, and permitted all that were shut up in it to return to their respective homes ; *Josephus De bello Jud. lib. 1. c. 18. ; Prideaux’s Connection, part 2. ; and Eachard’s Ecclesiastical History, lib. 1.*

A. M.  
4001. &c.  
Ann Dom  
1. &c.  
aut Ec.  
Volg. 3.  
from the  
beginning  
of the Go-  
spels to  
Matth. ix.  
8. Mark ii  
23. Luke  
vi. 1.

Matth. ii.  
19. Joseph  
returns with  
him, and  
his mother,  
and settles  
at Naza-  
reth.

<sup>d</sup> Before his death, he had, by will, (which, in some measure, Augustus confirmed,) settled his dominions upon his sons, and his sister. Archelaus he had made his successor in that part of his kingdom which included Judea, Idumæa, and Samaria; to Philip he had given Auranitis, Trachonitis, Panea, and Batanea: to Herod Antipas, Galilee, and Peræa; and to his sister Salome, some particular cities, with a considerable sum of money. After his death, therefore, (which was notified to Joseph by a vision,) God ordered him to return, with the child and his mother, into the land of Israel, which Joseph readily obeyed; but, when he arrived in Judea, hearing that Archelaus succeeded Herod in that part of the country, and being apprehensive that the cruelty and ambition of the father might be entailed upon the son, he feared to settle there; and, therefore, being directed by God in another vision, he retired into the dominions \* of his brother Herod Antipas, in Galilee, to his former habitation in Nazareth, where the strange occurrences of our Lord's

<sup>d</sup> Joseph. Antiq. lib. 17. c. 8.

\* This Antipas, his father Herod had once appointed to be his successor in his kingdom, but afterwards expunged him out of his will, and only made him tetrach; but, not long after his brother's accession to the throne, he went to Rome, with a purpose to dispute the kingdom with him, on pretence that his father's former will, by which he was constituted king, ought to take place before the latter, which was made when his understanding was not so perfect. Both the brothers procured able orators to set forth their pretensions before the emperor, but the emperor nevertheless refused to decide any thing concerning their affair, nor did he at length give Archelaus the title of a king, but only of an ethnarch, with one moiety of the territories which his father enjoyed: but these, in a few years after, he, by his ill conduct, forfeited. Of all the sons of Herod, indeed, this Archelaus is said to have been of the most fierce and bloody temper. At his first accession to the government, (under the pretence of a mutiny,) he had killed near three thousand of his subjects; and therefore Joseph, hearing of this, might well dread to go and settle in any part of his dominions; but, as Antipas was a man of a more mild disposition, and the birth of Jesus not made so public in Galilee, and at Nazareth, as it was at Bethlehem, and even at Jerusalem, by the coming of the wise men, and what happened at the purification of the Blessed Virgin, it was thought more advisable to retreat into this village, than to set up his abode in any populous city; *Pool's Annotations.*

Lord's birth were not so well known. \* After this, we have no certain account either of him, or his parents, only that they annually repaired with him to Jerusalem at the passover; and that, as his body increased in stature, so, † more especially the faculties of his soul were enlarged, being highly replenished with wisdom, and the grace of God.

In the mean time, † Archelaus, following the steps of his father, made himself so odious to the Jews, that the principal men among them, joining with those of Samaria, made a public complaint of him to Augustus, who, upon a full hearing both of his crimes and vindication, deprived him of his government, confiscated all his goods, banished him to Vienna, a city in Gaul, and reduced his dominions to the form of a Roman province, which, for ever after, was ruled by a governor sent from Rome, who was

A. M.  
4001, &c.  
Ann. Dom  
1, &c.  
aut. Ær.  
Vulg. 3.  
from the  
beginning  
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spes to  
Matth. ix.  
8. Mark ii.  
23. Luke  
vi. 1.

\* *N. B.* That the vulgar Christian æra, according to Dionysius Exiguus, which commences four years after the true time of Christ's birth, may begin to be computed much about this time, viz. from the beginning of the fourth year of Archelaus's, and the thirty first of Augustus's reign, computing from his victory over Anthony and Cleopatra.

† The words in the text are, *Jesus increased in wisdom, and in stature, and in favour with God and man*, Luke ii. 52. But if it be asked, how he, who was the eternal wisdom of the father, could be improved in any quality of his mind? The answer is, that all things in Scripture, which are spoken of Christ, are not spoken with respect to his entire person, but only with respect to one or other of the natures that are united in that person. His divine nature was infinite, and, consequently, capable of no improvements, but his human was: And, therefore, though the divine *λογος* was united to the human soul by its conception, yet might the divine nature communicate its powers to the human by distinct and gradual illuminations; and, accordingly, we may observe, that all public manifestation of it to the world seems to have been industriously declined, till ripeness of years and judgment had carried him up to the perfections of a man. So little reason have we to suppose, that he, who condescended to be like us in body, should think it below him to be so too in that other no less essential, but much more noble, part of us, our soul, without which, it was impossible for him to be man; so little reason to imagine, that the divine essence in him supplied the place and offices of intellectual faculties; *Whitby's Annotations*; and *Stanhope on the epistles and gospels*, vol. 2.

† Jewish Antiq. lib. 17. c. 12. et De bello Jud, lib. 2. c. 2.  
Vol. V. No. 25. N n



A. M.  
4012, &c.  
Ann Dom  
12. &c.  
Ær Vulg.  
8, &c  
from the  
beginning  
of the Go  
spels to  
Math ix.  
8. Mark ii  
23. Luke  
vi. 1

Christ's dis-  
puting with  
the doctors  
in the tem-  
ple at  
twelve  
years of  
age, and li-  
ving with  
his parents  
afterwards.

was called by the name of *Procurator*, but, in some cases, was subject to the president or governor of Syria.

When Palestine was reduced to this state, and our Blessed Saviour now advanced to the twelfth year of his age \*, he went up with his parents (according as their custom was) to Jerusalem at the time of the passover. His parents, after a stay of the whole seven days, having performed the usual ceremonies of the feast, were now returning, with great numbers of their neighbours and acquaintance, towards Galilee; and, never doubting, but that Jesus had joined himself with some of the company, they travelled on patiently for a whole day's journey: But, when night came on, and, among their relations and particular friends they could hear no tidings of him, it is not easy to imagine the greatness of their fears and † apprehensions, which made them return to Jerusalem with the utmost speed, to make all possible inquiry for him.

At

\* It is commonly observed by those that are learned in the customs and institutions of the Jewish church, that, till a child was twelve years old, he was not obliged to go to Jerusalem at the time of the passover; and that though their youth were usually thirteen before they were brought before the masters of the synagogue to give an account of their proficiency in religion, (which answers in a great measure to the Christian rite of confirmation) yet, since the season then appointed was accommodated to the capacities and attainments of children in general, without forbidding those of qualifications extraordinary, and whose genius (in the Jewish phrase) did run before the commandment, to appear sooner, our Saviour might offer himself to his examination a year before the common time: And this is the best reason that can be assigned for his staying behind his parents, when he could not but know, that they were departed from Jerusalem without him, and for his being found in one of the rooms adjoining to the temple, where the doctors of the law used to meet, not only to resolve the questions that were brought before them, but to examine likewise and confirm such of the youth as they found to be qualified for that ceremony, which, (according to the same authors) was actually performed by devout prayers and solemn benedictions; *Grotius in Luke ii 45.*; *Beausobre and Pool's Annotations*; and *Stanhope on the epistles and gospels, vol 2.*

† It may seem a little strange, perhaps, that Mary and Joseph, who had been sufficiently instructed, one would think, in the great article of Christ's divinity, and therefore must certainly know, that, as he was the power and wisdom of God, he

he

\* At the end of three days, they found him in one of the rooms of the temple, (probably in that of the grand Sanhedrim,) sitting among the learned doctors, and masters of Israel, hearing them discourse, and propounding such questions to them as raised the admiration of all that heard him, and made them astonished at the ripeness of his understanding. Nor were his parents less surprised to find him in that place; but, when his mother told him, with what impatience they had sought him, and, in some measure, blamed him for putting them in such a fright, the excuse which he made for himself was, *Know ye not, that I must be employed in my Father's house?* Words, which, though she at that time did not rightly understand, she took

A. M.  
4512. &c.  
Ann Dom  
Ær. Vulg.  
9, &c.  
from the  
beginning  
of the Go-  
spels to  
Matt. ix 8.  
Mark ii 23.  
Luke vi. 1.

he could neither fall into any danger, nor come to any harm, should so mightily afflict themselves, when they came to miss him. The reason which Origin (Hom. i. 9 in Luc.) seems to assign is, not that his parents supposed that he was lost, or come to any mischance, but were apprehensive that he had withdrawn himself to some other place, and was possibly gone up to heaven, there to continue, till his eternal Father should think proper to send him down again: But the most easy and natural solution is, that without ever considering what they had sufficient reason to believe concerning his divinity and omnipotence, they suffered themselves to be carried away by their natural tenderness; and could not, without great concern, see themselves deprived of his company, uncertain of what had befallen him, or for what possible reason he should absent himself from theirs. It must not be denied however, that though something may be allowed to a parent's fondness, yet it does not appear from their whole conduct, and especially from Mary's complaint, and our Saviour's reply, ver. 48, 49. that they had, as yet, a clear and perfect knowledge of his divine nature in union with the human: and therefore the evangelist has remarked upon them, 'that they understood not the saying which he spake unto them,' ver. 50; *Calmet's Commentary*; and *Pool's Annotations*.

\* The words in the text are, *after three days they found him*; but we need not from thence infer, that they were three days seeking him, but rather, that it was three days from the time they set out from Jerusalem; going on their journey the first day: returning to Jerusalem the second; and finding him in the temple on the third: For, since they found him in the temple, which, in all probability, was the first place they sought for him in, we can hardly imagine, that they should be three days in Jerusalem before they found him; *Pool's Annotations*.

A. M. took care nevertheless for ever after to register in her mind !  
 4012, &c. Being thus happily found by his parents, he returned  
 Ann Dom with them to Nazareth, and there, living in all dutiful sub-  
 Ær. Vulg. jection to them, wrought (very probably) with his reputed  
 9, &c. father in the trade of a carpenter ; and, after his father's  
 from the death, (which is supposed to have happened about a year  
 beginning of the Go- before the preaching of John the Baptist, ' still con-  
 spels to Matth. ix. tinued in the same occupation : As indeed we can scarce  
 8. Mark ii. help inferring, from the rude treatment of the Nazarenes  
 23. Luke his towns-men ; as also from the total silence of the evange-  
 vi. 1. lists, as to the intermediate actions of his life \*, that, though  
 Luke ii. 51. he grew in favour with God and man, yet (considering his  
 excellencies)

\* Mark vi. 3.

\* It may possibly be made a question, Why the evangelists have given us no account of our Saviour's life, from the twelfth year of his age, till he began his ministry, which (according to the vulgar æra) was about the thirtieth ; because if, in this intermediate space, he did any thing worthy of remembrance, it ought in all reason to have been recorded. But when it is considered that the end of the sacred penmen was, not so much to gratify our curiosity, as to consult our profit, we cannot but admire the great wisdom of God (by whose inspiration they wrote) in passing by the less active parts of our Lord's life, which would certainly have swelled their gospels to immensurable volumes, fit for the perusal of none but the studious and such as had plenty of time at their command : whereas now, taking the four gospels together, they make but a small book, and separately, no more than little manuals that may be carried about with us where ever we go ; may be soon read over, and easily remembered even by men of mean capacities and no great leisure : And yet they contain all the transactions of our Saviour's life which chiefly concern us to know ; I mean, such as relate to his mediatorial office, as that he came into the world to teach us ; to die, and to rise again for us ; to instruct us by his heavenly doctrine, as our prophet ; to offer himself as a sacrifice upon the cross, as our priest ; and to loose the bands of death, and ascend triumphant into heaven, as our king. *Ille ergo tempora*, says the learned Spanhemius, *nota quæ nobis impensa, quæ in munere transmissa, quæ ad doctrinæ fidei nostræ sufficere visa, quæ Christum exhibent, vel in cathedra, vel in cruce, vel in throno. Sic etenim ostensum, illa tantum nobis quærenda et vestiganda esse in Messia, quæ actus officii, tum prophetici, tum sacerdotalis, tum regii, cujus causa venit, concernunt.* For there are also many other things, says the evangelist, that Jesus did, which are not written in this book ; but these are written, that ye might believe



excellencies) he lived in a very obscure manner, and, till the time of his manifestation to Israel, shewed no miraculous marks to distinguish him from the rest of mankind.

<sup>a</sup> In the eighteenth year of our Saviour's life, died Augustus Cæsar at Nola, in Campania, after a reign of near forty years.) to the inexpressible grief of all his subjects, and was succeeded by Tiberius, the son of his wife Livia, by a former husband, but a prince of a quite contrary disposition to his predecessor. In the second year of his succession to the empire, he recalled Rufus from the government of Judea, and sent Valerius Gratus (who was the fourth governor in these parts since the banishment of Archelaus) to succeed him. <sup>b</sup> Gratus, having continued in Judea about eleven years, was at length recalled, and Pontius Pilate (a person too like his master Tiberius, of a fierce and irreconcilable spirit, and of a \* cruel and covetous disposition) was sent governor in his place. In the first year of his coming, (which was the fifteenth year of Tiberius, from the time that he was admitted to reign in copartnership with Augustus,) † John the Baptist began to open his

A. M.  
4018, &c.  
Ann Dom  
Ær Vulg.  
15, &c.  
from the  
beginning  
of the Go-  
spels to  
Math. ix.  
8. Mark ii.  
23. Luke  
vi. 1.

The death  
of Augu-  
stus, and  
disposition  
of Judea.

A. M.  
4033 &c.  
Ann Dom  
30, &c.

com-

lieve that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life through his name, John xxi. 25. and xx. 31.; Spanheim's Dub. evang. part 2. dub. 96.

<sup>a</sup> Joseph. Antiq. lib. 18. c. 3. and Dion. <sup>b</sup> Ibid.

\* Josephus has given several instances of Pilate's great cruelty in the course of his government, viz. that he caused the Roman soldiers to fall upon a great number of Galileans, (very likely the followers of Judas Gaulonites,) and to slaughter them like so many sheep in the temple, and on the very day appointed for the killing of the passover, and so mingled their blood with their sacrifices, Luke xiii. 1. That when the people clamoured against his taking some of the sacred money out of the temple, he ordered the soldiers, upon a signal given, to fall upon them with large battoons, so that many died of the blows which they received, and many were trodden to death in the throng: And that the Samaritans as well as the Jews, felt the severity of his administration, when he destroyed great numbers of them near Tirathaba: and of those whom he took, that were of any interest or quality among them, struck off their heads; Josephus De bello Jud. lib. 2. 8. and Antiq. lib. 18. c. 5.

† How John passed the former part of his life the Scripture is silent: but there is an ancient tradition in the church, that Eliabeth, hearing of the sad havock which Herod's barbarity had made among the infants of Bethlehem, fled into the wilderness to secure her child from the tyrant's rage, and there attended him with all the care and tenderness of an affection-

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A. M.  
4033. &c.  
Ann Dom  
Æt. Vulg.  
30. &c.  
from the  
beginning  
of the Go-  
spels to  
Matth. ix  
& Mark ii.  
& Luke  
vi. 1.

commission for the preparation of our Saviour's way before him, \* by preaching *the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.* He

ate mother: That the child was about eighteen months old when his mother thus fled with him: but after forty days, she died, and his father Zachariah, at the next time of his ministration, was by the command of Herod (because he would not discover the place of his son's concealment) put to death. That, in this destitution of natural parents, God sent an angel to be his nourisher and guardian, (as he had formerly done to Elijah, when he fled from the rage of Ahab) until he came of strength to provide for himself, and that then he lived in the manner that the evangelists have described. When he began his preaching, it is not so well agreed. Lightfoot, and some others who believe that our Saviour was born in September, and that John was now beginning to be thirty years of age are of opinion that he began his ministry about the passover; but Usher, and his followers, do, with more probability, suppose that his preaching began upon the tenth day of the seventh month, which answers to our nineteenth day of October,) five days before the feast of tabernacles, upon the great day of expiation when the high priest entered the holy of holies and when so solemn a fast was enjoined, that whosoever did not afflict his soul at that time was to be cut off from the people; *Howell's History*; and *Galmet's Dictionary*, under the word *John*.

\* The meaning of this phrase is, that John preached repentance Matth. iii. 2. and baptized those that were penitent, in token of the remission of their sins, even as they, on their parts received baptism in testimony of the sincerity of their repentance. Now, baptism, we know, was no new or strange thing among the Jews. It was acknowledged, and practised as an emblem of purification from past guilt, and a rite of entering solemnly into covenant with God. The expositors of their law agree, that this ceremony passed upon the whole congregation of Israel, just before the law was given at mount Sinai; and their custom, in all succeeding ages, has been to receive their Heathen proselytes by baptism, as well as by sacrifice and circumcision. In conformity to this therefore, John both administered and exhorted his followers to this ordinance of baptism, as an evidence of their penitence for past sins, and profession of better obedience for the future. But then as faith is a qualification for baptism, as well as repentance, he propounded our Lord for the object of faith to all who received this ordinance at his hands: *For John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance saying unto the people, that they should believe in him, who should come after him. i. e. on Christ Jesus, Acts xix. 4.* It is a great mistake therefore in some, to suppose, that the baptism of John was, in substance, the same with what Christ did

He had been † bred up in the wilderness, and lived an austere life. ‡ Locusts and wild honey, such as nature produced in these desert places, was the chief diet he lived upon,

A. M.  
4033, &c.  
Ann Dom  
Ær. Vulg.

upon, 30, &c.  
from the  
beginning  
of the Go-  
spels to  
Matt. ix 8.  
Mark ii. 23.  
Luke vi 1.

did afterwards institute: For John neither did, nor could, baptize his disciples in the name of the Holy Ghost, as the apostle did, because the Holy Ghost was not yet given John vii. 39; he did not baptize them in the name of Christ for had he done so there had been no occasion for the question, *Whether he himself were the Christ* or not? Luke iii. 15. Herein therefore lay the imperfection of John's baptism, that though it prepared men to be Christians, yet it did not make them so; and therefore we find St Paul baptizing again some disciples at Ephesus, (who had before received the baptism of John,) in order to fit them for the reception of the Holy Ghost Acts xix. 5. 6; *Whitby's Annotations*; and *Stanhope on the epistles and gospels, vol. 4.*

The preach-  
ing of John  
the Baptist,  
and his  
manner of  
life.

† A wilderness among the Jews, did not signify a place wholly void of inhabitants but a place that was more mountainous, less fruitful, less peopled, and where the inhabitants were more dispersed, than in other parts of the country. For, as it is incongruous to suppose that the Baptist should preach the doctrine of repentance to stocks and stones, and wild beasts; the wilderness here must be understood in a comparative sense, and consequently the wilderness of Judea, where he preached and baptized must be that tract of land which lay on each side of the river Jordan on the confines of Enon and Salim; *Whitby's Annotations*; *Well's Geography of the New Testament*; and *Spanheim's Dubia evang. part 2 dub 97.*

‡ There is no reason for running into criticisms; what the common diet of the Baptist was, whether fowl, or fish, or herbs, or wild pease, (for the word *ἀγρίαις* has been made to signify all these,) since the thing is notorious that locusts (in the most obvious sense of the word) were creatures which the Levitical law looked upon as clean, and allowed the Jews to eat, Levit. xi. 22. That they were a common food, as the ancients affirm, (Pliny, lib. 17 c. 3. and Strabo, lib. 16.) in Afric, Persia, Syria, and even Palestine itself; that, according to the account of some modern authors, in some places they are brought in waggon loads, and sold in the market for the common people to feed on; and that they are frequently seen upon the banks of the river Jordan, of the same form, but much larger than ours; and being either fried in oil, or dried in the sun. are accounted a good sort of food. As little reason is there for men to puzzle themselves about what this *μέλι ἄγριον*, or *wild honey*, means, since every one knows, that Judea was famed for plenty of honey, that, in several places of Scripture, it is said to flow with honey; and from the instances of Samson, Judg.



A. M.  
4031, &c  
Ann Dom  
Æt. Vulg.  
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from the  
beginning  
of the Go  
spels to  
Matt. ix, 8.  
Mark ii. 23  
Luke vi. 1.

upon, and a † loose coat made of camels' hair, and fastened with a leathern girdle, the only garb he wore; and therefore no person was so proper to inculcate the doctrines of repentance and reformation, as he, who, by his free and resolute preaching, joined with this great severity of life, soon procured a vast auditory, and numerous profelytes of all ranks and qualities, from Jerusalem, and all Judea.

Judg. xiv. 8. and Jonathan, 1 Sam. xiv. 25. it must be concluded, that wild honey, such as either distilled from the boughs like dew, or was found in the cliffs of rocks, or hollow trunks of trees, was no uncommon thing in that country. But though these locusts and wild honey may very properly be taken in their natural and most obvious sense, yet it must not therefore be thought, that John never eat any thing else, but that, for the generality, he made use of such slender diet, and contented himself with what the desert place, which he chose for his habitation, could afford him; *Spanheim's Dubia evang. part 2. dub. 99.*

† We are told by some authors, that the hair of camels about the Caspian-sea, was formerly the softest in the world, of which was made a very fine stuff: and that, in the empire of the great Cham of Tartary, in the city of Calacia, the metropolis of the province of Tangouth, there is a kind of cloth, which the inhabitants call *zambelotte*, (the same, no doubt, with what we call *camelot*,) made of wool and camels hair, perfectly good, and as fine as any cloth whatsoever. But there is reason good to think, that John's habit was far from being of this kind, because it would not so well suit with the condition of a man living in a wilderness, to whom our Saviour opposes those that are *clothed in soft raiment*; would not so well agree with the evangelist's design of setting forth the Baptist's austerity in his habit, as well as his diet; nor comport so well with the description of Elias, whom he came to represent, *an hairy man and one girt with a girdle of leather about his loins*, 2 Kings i. 8. Though therefore we may not infer from the expression, that the Baptist's habit was mere sack-cloth, (as some would have it,) yet we cannot but conclude from thence that it was plain and coarse, such as became the place where he lived, (where camels, we are told, were in great plenty,) and a prophet and preacher of righteousness to wear. For so in the poem, written by Paulinus, it is described.

Vestis erat curvi setis conferta camelî,  
Contra luxuriem molles duraret ut artus,  
Arceretque graves compuncto corpore somnos.

*Ælian's History, c. 24.; Hammond's Annotations; and Spanheim's Dub. evang. part 2. dub. 98.*

Judea, and all the region about Jordan, confessing their sins before God, and entering into this new institution by baptism.

Among the great multitudes that came to his preaching and baptism, there were Pharisees †, and Sadducees not a few, whose confidence and immorality he sharply reprov'd; while, at the same time, he exhorted the common people to works of extensive charity; the publicans ‡, to avoid oppression and injustice; the soldiers, to abstain from plunder and violence; and every one, in short, to beware of those crimes to which their employments and manner of life did most expose them.

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Ann Dom.  
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from the  
beginning  
of the Go-  
spels to  
Matt. ix. 8.  
Mark ii. 23.  
Luke vi. 1.

† We have already, in a separate dissertation, given a particular account of the rise and principles of the several sects among the Jews, and need only take notice here, that the Pharisees are thought to take their name from the word *Parash*, which signifies *separation*, because they were separated from all others in their extraordinary pretences to sanctity, and some particular observances; and that the Sadducees (who were directly opposite to the Pharisees both in temper and principles) derived their name, either from *Sadock*, who lived near 300 years before our Saviour's birth, and is supposed to be the founder of the sect, or (as some think) from *Sedeck* which signifies *justice*, because they pretended to be the only exact distributors of justice, and were rigid indeed in the execution of it; *Eachard's Ecclesiastical history*, in the introduction.

‡ The publicans were persons of no particular sect, nor of any religious function among the Jews, but certain public officers whom the Romans employed to collect their tributes, tolls, and imposts. This office was once of great account among the Romans, and conferred upon none less than the equestrian order; but, when it came to fall into the hands of the Jews, who farmed it of the Romans, it soon became base and infamous, and more especially odious to the Jews upon these two accounts: 1<sup>st</sup>, Because these tributes were looked upon as a standing instance of their slavery, which they, who made such boasts of their being a free-born people, and invested in that privilege by God himself, could least of all endure. And, 2<sup>dly</sup>, Because these publicans, having farmed the customs of the Romans at high rates, did generally make use of all methods of extortion and oppression, to enable them both to pay their rents, and to raise some advantage to themselves. Upon these accounts, the publicans, as conspiring with the Romans both to impoverish and enslave their countrymen, became so universally abhorred by the Jewish nation, that they held it unlawful to do them any act of common courtesy, nay, even to eat or to drink with them, for which we find them so frequently

A. M.  
4033, &c.  
Ann Dom  
Vulg. Ær  
30, &c.  
from the  
beginning  
of the Go-  
spels to  
Math. ix.  
8. Mark ii.  
23. Luke  
vi. 1.

Matth. iii.  
11.  
Mark i. 7.  
Luke ii.  
16.

His testi-  
mony of  
our Savi-  
our, and  
our Savi-  
our's bap-  
tism.

A. M.  
4034, &c.  
Ann Dom  
30, &c.

These solemn admonitions, pronounced with so much weight and authority, procured him a mighty veneration among the people, insomuch, that several began to look upon him as the promised and now expected Messiah; but, to remove all thoughts of this kind, he freely declared, 'That he only baptized them with water to repentance, and a new life; but that there was one coming, and ready to appear among them, who would baptize them with the effusion of the Holy Ghost, and who so far exceeded him in power and excellency, that he was not worthy to do for him the meanest or most servile office.' These were the doctrines which John preached, and this the testimony which he gave of Jesus, even before he had the happiness to know him.

After John had continued in his ministry for several months, our Lord thought fit to remove from his private retirement at Nazareth, and, taking leave of his mother and his trade, passed over into Judea, to Bethabara †, on the banks of the river Jordan, where John was then baptizing.

He, who was innocence and purity itself, had certainly no need of the baptism of repentance, but being minded to honour and sanctify the institution ‡, he offered himself to

John, ly blaming our Saviour; *Eachard's Ecclesiastical history*, in the introduction, page 27.

† Bethabara does, in the Hebrew language, signify as much a place of passage: and therefore, whereas we read, Josh ii. 7. 23. that there was a fording place over Jordan not far from Jericho; and again, Josh. iii. 16. that the people passed over right against Jericho, it is probably conjectured, that hereabouts stood Bethabara, and was the place of reception and entertainment for passengers out of Judea into Peræa, or the country beyond Jordan; nay, it is imagined by some, that, in the very same place of the river where the ark stood, while the Israelites passed over, our blessed Saviour (the ark of the covenant of grace) was baptized by John the Baptist; *Wells's Geography of the New Testament*.

‡ There are some other reasons which might induce our Lord to come to John's baptism, besides what himself alledges, viz. the performance of all righteousness, or whatever had a tendency to the people's edification; as, that he might authorize this baptism of John by his public approbation; that by this rite he might be initiated to his prophetic office, and consecrated to the service of God; that hereby he might abolish the ceremony of the Jewish baptism, and more effectually recommend that of his own institution, to which this of the Baptist, was an introduction; and more especially, that, in the presence of



John, and when John, inspired with a prophetic spirit †, knew him, and thereupon endeavoured to decline the office, he gave him such reasons for the expediency of the thing, as made him no longer hesitate, but immediately baptized him. Jesus † was no sooner got out of the water, but,

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4034. &c.  
Ann Dom  
30, &c.  
from the  
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of the Go-  
spels to

of the Baptist, and all the company that had resorted to him, he might obtain the testimony of the Holy Ghost, and of his heavenly Father, to confirm John in the belief of his being the promised Messiah and to induce the people, as soon as he began his ministry, to follow and attend to him; *Calmet's Commentary.*

† The words in the text are these, *Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan, unto John, to be baptized of him, but John forbode him,* Matt. iii. 13. 14.; but how could John forbid him, when he says of himself *I knew him not, but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending and remaining on him, the same is he who baptizeth with the Holy Ghost,* John i. 33. Now to this it may be answered, that since one part of John's ministry was to bear witness of that light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world, it was highly necessary that our Saviour should be unknown to him in person, before he came to his baptism, that the world might have no suspicion of any collusion, or that the Baptist testified of him by compact. Though, therefore he had never seen the face of our Saviour, because they were bred up in different countries, yet, by a particular revelation, he knew that he was already come into the world, and was shortly to baptize with the Holy Ghost; and therefore, when our Saviour came, and presented himself to be baptised, he had immediately another revelation, that this was the great person of whom he had been told before; even as Samuel, having been told by God, that, *on the morrow, a man should come to him to be the captain over his people Israel,* 1 Sam. ix. 16. upon Saul's appearing, had another inspiration, resembling the Baptist's here, *Behold the man of whom I spake to thee,* ver. 17.; *Whitby's Annotations.*

‡ The observation of the Greek church, in relation to this matter, is this, that he who ascended out of the water must first descend down into it; and consequently, that baptism is to be performed not by sprinkling, but by washing the body. And indeed, he must be strangely ignorant of the Jewish rites of baptism, who seems to doubt of this, since, to the due performance of it, they required the immersion of the whole body to such a degree of nicety, that if any dirt was upon it, that hindered the water from coming to that part, they thought the ceremony not rightly done. The Christians, no doubt, took this rite from the Jews, and followed them in their manner of performing it. Accordingly, several authors have shewn, that we

A. M.  
4074, &c.  
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from the  
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spels to  
Matth. ix.  
8. Mark ii.  
23. Luke  
vi. 1.



but, as he was making his addressees to heaven, the sky on a sudden was divided by a great radiancy \*, and the Holy Ghost (in the manner of a † dove) descended upon his sacred head, with an audible voice from heaven, wherein God declared him 'his beloved Son, in whom he was well 'pleased.'

Our

read now where in scripture of any one's being baptised, but by immersion, and, from the acts of councils and ancient rituals, have proved, that this manner of immersion continued (as much as possible) to be used for thirteen hundred years after Christ. But it is much to be questioned, whether the prevalence of custom, and the over fondness of parents, will, in these cold climates especially, ever suffer it to be restored; *Whitby's Annotations.*

\* The words of St Matthew are,—*Lo, the heavens were opened*; in St Mark, *cloven or rent*. The common people of the Jews indeed were of opinion, that the heavens were firm and solid, and that the fire, which fell from thence upon the face of the earth, burst through this firmament, and made an opening in this vast convex that surrounds us: And therefore it is, that the evangelists express themselves in this manner, in accommodation to the prejudices and capacities of the vulgar. But by the phrase we need understand no more, than that a sudden beam of radiant light came darting from the skies, (like a flash of lightning from the clouds,) and made it seem as though the heavens had been opened or rent to let it out; because to the naked eye, the air at that time seems to divide, to make a clearer and fuller way for the light; *Calnet's Commentary*; and *Pool's Annotations*.

† The ancients were generally of opinion, that the Holy Ghost, in his descent upon our Saviour, assumed the real shape of a dove, which, at that time more especially, was a very proper representation of his dove-like nature, Isa. xlii. 2. and of all such as were to receive the same Spirit, and are required to be as harmless as doves; but most of the moderns (though they allow, that the Blessed Spirit did, at this time, assume a visible shape, to render his descent manifest) do maintain, that the *descent* *perceived* relates not to the body or shape of a dove, but to the manner of a dove's descending, and lighting on any thing; and thence they infer, that it was this body of light which issued from the skies that came down upon Christ, and, while he was praying, hung hovering over his head, just after the manner and motion of a dove, before it settles upon any thing. Whether of these opinions should prevail, it is idle to dispute, since neither of them is destitute of some countenance from scripture, neither of them injurious to the dignity of the Holy Ghost; *Calnet's Commentary*; and *Hammond's Annotations*.

Our Blessed Lord, being thus by baptism, and the unction of the Holy Ghost, prepared for his prophetic office, was, by the impulse of the divine Spirit, carried further into the wilderness of Judea; where, after he had fasted forty days and forty nights \*, (as Moses did on Mount Sinai,) and was now very hungry, the devil † assumed a bodily shape, and set upon him with a threefold temptation. 1st, From his hunger he took occasion to tempt him to despair, and distrust of his Father's care of him, who had abandoned him in that condition, and therefore persuading him that he was not the Son of God, he put him upon the experiment of his being such, by making the stones become bread: But our Saviour soon answered him by a passage out of the Scripture, intimating, that 'God, when he pleased, could employ means extraordinary for the support and nourishment of men.' 2dly, His next essay was, to try how far pride and presumption would affect him; and therefore, carrying him through the air, and setting him upon the † highest part of the temple, he put

A. M. 4034, &c. Ann Dom 30, &c. from the beginning of the Gospels to Matt. ix. 8. Mark ii. 23. Luke vi. 1.   
 Matt. iv. 1. Mark i. 12. Luke vi. 1. His temptation by the devil, and conquest over him.

\* Whoever considers the frailty of human nature, cannot but allow, that so great and so long an abstinence, without any sense of hunger, (for the evangelists tell us, that our Saviour was only hungry afterwards,) must be altogether miraculous, and so no duty to us: and, if he reflects withal, that the end of his fast was not to chastise or subdue that body, which was never irregular, (as the design of all our fasting is,) he must allow, that our Saviour, in this particular, set no precedent to us; and therefore it is cruelty, or a superstitious folly at least, in a matter so supernatural, to enjoin men to follow his steps; *Whitby's Annotations.*

† This word, which answers exactly with the Hebrew *Satan*, signifies a *calumniator* or *accuser*; and, as it occurs in Scripture always in the singular number, is supposed to denote that evil spirit who tempted our first parents, the chief of the rebel angels, and the avowed enemy of the saints, 1 Thess. 3. 5. and 1 Pet. v. 8. &c.; *Beaufobre's Annotations.*

<sup>h</sup> Deut. viii. 3.

‡ According to the description that Josephus gives us of the temple, which Herod built, we hear of no pinnacles, or lofty turrets above the rest of the building; and therefore have reason to think, that πτερύγον which is rendered *pinnacle*, should rather signify the battlement, or that parapet-wall which was carried round the top of the temple, (as well as private houses, Deut. xxii. 8.) to keep men from falling from the roof: And, if we may be allowed to conjecture on what part of the battlement it



A. M.  
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Ann Dom  
30, &c.  
from the  
beginning  
of the Go  
spels to  
Matt. ix 8.  
Mark 1. 3  
Luke vi. 1

put him upon the proof of his being the Son of God, by throwing himself off from thence, and flying in the air, alledging a text out of the Psalmist <sup>i</sup> to encourage him: But Jesus as soon answered him by another text, commanding men <sup>k</sup> not to tempt God or depend upon his providence for their conservation in dangers of their own seeking. 3dly, His last experiment was, to tempt him with the charms of ambition; and therefore, transporting him again through the air, to the top \* of an exceeding high

was that the devil placed our Saviour, it seems very likely, that it was on the top of that gallery whose building (according to the same author) was so prodigious high. and the valley underneath it so stupendously deep, that it turned one's eyes and head to look from the top to the bottom of it. and was indeed one of the most confounding spectacles under the sun; *Hammond's Annotations*; and *Jewish Antiquities*, lib. 15. c. 14.

<sup>i</sup> Psal. xci. 11.      <sup>k</sup> Deut. vi. 16.

\* The best account that we have, both of the wilderness and high mountain where our Lord was tempted, is in the travels of Mr Maundrell, (for the ancients tell us very little of them,) who informs us,—That in his journey from Jerusalem to Jordan, after he had passed over Mount Olivet he proceeded in an intricate way, among hills and vallies interchangeably; and, after some hours travel in this sort of road, arrived at the mountainous desert, into which our Blessed Saviour was led by the Spirit, to be tempted by the devil: 'A miserable dry place,' says he, 'it is, consisting of high rocky mountains so torn and disordered, as if the earth had here suffered some great convulsion, in which its very bowels had been turned outward.—From the tops of these hills of desolation, we had, however, a delightful prospect of the mountains of Arabia, the Dead Sea, and the plains of Jericho, into which last we descended after about five hours march from Jerusalem. As soon as we entered the plain we turned upon the left hand, and going about one hour that way, came to the foot of the Quarantania, (so called from our Lord's forty days fast,) which they say, is the mountain where the devil tempted him with the visionary scene of all the kingdoms and glories of the world. It is very high, and steep, and its ascent not only difficult, but dangerous.' This is the account which our countryman gives us of the place where our Saviour was probably tempted: But it is not supposable, that, even from the highest mountain of the world, the devil could shew all the kingdoms of it; and therefore the most rational account of this matter is, that, 'as he was the prince of the power of the air, he formed an airy horizon' (as Dr Light-

foot

high mountain, he there made a lively representation to him of all the kingdoms of the world, with all their dazzling glories, at one view, and then told him, that 'these, with all their pomp and splendor, were delivered to his disposal, and should be given to him, if he would but acknowledge his benefactor, and worship him.' But this was a boldness and blasphemy, such as provoked our Lord to exert his divine power, and to command him peremptorily to be gone, but with this *memento* out of the Scripture likewise, *'Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve'*: Whereupon the devil left him for that time, and angels, sent from heaven, came with refreshments for him, after his triumphant combat

A. M.  
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of the Go-  
spels to  
Ma th. ix.  
8 Mark ii.  
13. Luke  
vi. 1.

During our Saviour's fasting and temptation in the wilderness, his faithful forerunner John the Baptist, being thus assured both by the descent of the Spirit, and the voice from heaven, that Jesus was the true and long expected Messiah, made full and open declarations of it to all the multitude that came to hear him; and when the Sanhedrim at Jerusalem had sent a deputation of their Priests and Levites, (who were of the sect of the \* Pharisees,)

foot expresses it,) 'before the eyes of Christ, which might carry such a pompous and glorious appearance of kingdoms, states, and royalties in the face of it, as if he had seen those very kingdoms and states in reality.' God, we are told, caused Moses to see the whole land of promise from the top of Nebo, (as it is generally thought,) by representing it to him in a large plan or map of it, in all the vallies round about him: and, in like manner, (by divine permission,) in all the vallies round about the high mountain on which our Lord stood. the devil might make a large draught of the stately edifices, the guards, and attendants of kings and princes, appearing in their splendor, visible to his eye, which he could not have seen so advantageously had he stood on a plain: *Well's Geography of the New Testament; Calmet's Commentary; and Pool's and Whitby's Annotations.*

<sup>1</sup> Deut. vi. 13.

\* The Sanhedrim (whose business it was to take cognisance of the pretensions of all prophets when they began to appear in the world, and to enquire into their authority and mission) thought proper, out of their body, to depute such as were of this sect, because, as they were persons who believed the immortality of the soul, and the resurrection of the body they were better qualified than the Sadduces (who believed neither) to enquire of John, Whether he was Elias? Being in this particular mere Pythagoreans, and fancying, that the soul of one great

John i 19.  
John's second testimony concerning our Saviour.

A. M.  
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from the  
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of the Go-  
spels to  
Matth. ix.  
8 Mark ii.  
23. Luke  
vi. 1.

fees,) to demand of him, Who he was? He very readily acknowledged that he was not the Messiah, whom they expected, nor Elias, who (as they imagined) would personally appear among them, nor any other prophet \* risen from the dead; but then, he gave them to understand, that, though he was not Elias himself, yet he was that prophet whom Isaiah intended, when he called him *the voice of one † crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord*; that his baptism was only of water, but the efficacy of it depended upon one among them, whom they knew not; one, who succeeded him indeed in time, but so far surpassed him in dignity, that he was not worth so much as to be his servant.

John i. 29

The very next day, after the departure of the Pharisees, as our Saviour was returning from the wilderness to Bethabara, John pointed him out to the multitude, as *the immaculate Lamb ‡ of God, which taketh away the sins of*

great or good man might frequently pass into another's body. Vid. Joseph Antiq. lib. 18. c. 2. and De bello Jud. lib. 2. c. 8. And as they were the patrons of tradition, and exact in all the ordinary rules and customs that were to be observed, they were the properest persons to examine into this new rite of baptism, by way of preparation for the Messiah, of which their traditions were wholly silent; and therefore they ask him, Why baptizest thou? *i. e.* 'Why usurpest thou an authority which belongs to none but either to the Messiah, Elias, or some prophet, by initiating us, who are already under the covenant, into a new doctrine by baptism, which is usually administered to none but Heathen proselytes?' And from hence it appears, that the Pharisees were the properest men to send to the Baptist upon this message; *Calmet's Commentary*; and *Whitby's* and *Beausobre's Annotations*.

\* It was a received tradition among the Jews, that at the coming of the Messiah, several of the ancient prophets should arise from the dead; *Beausobre's Annotations*.

† It is the opinion of some that John chose rather to preach, and to fulfil his ministry, in the wilderness, than in the temple, in order to make a more illustrious difference between himself, who was but a messenger, (whose office it was to prepare his Lord's way,) and his Lord himself, of whom it was prophesied, that he should frequently appear and teach in the temple, Mal. iii. 1.; *Pool's Annotations*

‡ Under the Jewish law, when any sacrifice was offered for sin, he that brought it, laid his hand upon it, according to the commandment of God, Levit. i. 4. iii. 2. iv. 4 and by that rite, transferred his sins upon the victim, which, after such act,



of mankind; and then freely declared, that he was the very person, of whose superiority, both in dignity and existence, he had spoken, and of whom, by certain tokens, he both knew, and *could bear record, that he was the Son of God.*

To two of his own disciples, the next day, he gave the same testimony, inasmuch that they left their old master and followed Jesus; and when Andrew \* (who was one of them) went and discovered the same thing to his elder brother Simon, he, in like manner, became one of his disciples, to whom, the day following, were adjoined Philip, an inhabitant of the city Bethsaida †, and an intimate friend of his <sup>m</sup> named *Nathaniel of Cana in Galilee*, and supposed to be the same with the apostle Bartholomew.

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Matth. ix.  
8. Mark ii:  
23. Luke  
vi 1.  
John i 35.  
The com-  
ing in of  
his disciples

is said to take and to carry them away. Accordingly, in the daily sacrifice of the lamb, the stationary men, who were the representatives of the people, laid their hands upon the lambs that were to be offered, and when they were thus offered, they are said to make an atonement for their souls, Exod. xxx. 15, 16.; and, in analogy hereunto, Christ is here called, by way of eminence, *the Lamb of God*, because God intended to lay upon him, *who was manifest to take away sin*, 1 John iii. 5. and came to suffer in our stead, the punishments due to the iniquities of us all; *Whitby's* and *Beaufobre's Annotations.*

\* The other, in all probability, was John, the beloved apostle and evangelist, (because he describes the circumstances of the time and conversation that passed so very punctually, John i. 40;) but in this, and several other places of his gospel, (according to his wonted modesty,) he chuses to conceal his name; *Hammond's Annotations.*

† There is no mention of this place in the Old Testament, and the reason is, because (as Josephus tells us) it was but a very small village, till Philip the Tetrarch built it up to the bulk and appearance of a very magnificent city, and gave it the name of *Julias*, out of respect to Julia, the daughter of Augustus Cæsar. Its original name, in the Hebrew tongue, imports a place of fishing, or else hunting, and for both these exercises it was very commodiously situated. As it belonged to the tribe of Naphtali, a country remarkable for its plenty of deer, Gen. xlix. 21. it was excellently fitted for the latter of these pastimes; and as it lay on the north end of the lake of Gennezareth, just where the river Jordan runs into it, it was so commodious for the former, that two of the persons just now mentioned, viz. Peter and Andrew, were fishermen by trade; *Well's Geography of the New Testament.*

<sup>m</sup> John xxi. 2.

A. M.  
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Matth. ix.  
8. Mark ii  
23. Luke  
vi. 1.

This Nathaniel, at his very first coming, upon our Saviour's expressing some tokens of his omniscience, made a liberal confession of his being the Messiah, the Son of God; whereupon our Saviour assured him, that, in a short time, he should have a fuller conviction of his divinity, when he should see the angels of heaven \* ascending and descending (as they did once in the vision to Jacob) to attend the person, and execute the orders of the Son of Man †.

With these five disciples, Jesus ‡, and his mother, were invited

John ii. 1.  
His first mi-  
racle of  
turning wa-  
ter into  
wine at the  
marriage  
feast.

\* To ascend and descend, to come and go, (according to the Hebrew manner of expression,) denotes a free and familiar commerce; and such, no doubt, was the ministry of angels, at our Saviour's temptation and agony, at his resurrection and ascension. The words however must be owned to be a plain allusion to Jacob's ladder, Gen. xxviii. 12, 13. on the top of which was the divine Majesty, and the angels ascending to receive his commands, and descending to execute them. And therefore others have thought, that Christ by these words intended to inform his apostles, 'That the miracles which they should soon see him perform, would declare the divine Majesty present with him, and giving him such commands as he was to execute in his prophetic office, as clearly and manifestly, as if they had seen the angels of God ascending and descending upon him;' *Whitby's Annotations.*

† It is observed by several, that only Ezekiel in the Old Testament, and our Saviour in the New. are called by this name; that our Saviour is never so called but by himself; and that this is the common appellation that he gives himself. Ezekiel was doubtless so called, to distinguish him from those spiritual beings, with whom he so frequently conversed: And our Saviour took upon him that title, not only to distinguish his human from his divine nature, but to express his humility likewise, and want of reputation, while he continued in the form of a servant. Chemnitius, however, puts another construction upon this title. He thinks, that as the term *Messiah* (which is commonly called *Christ*) was taken out of Daniel, so that other of the *Son of Man*, is taken from thence likewise; for behold one, like the son of man, (says the prophet,) came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the ancient of days, chap vii 13. and that therefore our Saviour did usually call himself so, in compliance to the prophecy, as well as to assert his humanity, and declare himself his Father's servant, according to the character given of him by Isaiah xlii 1: *Pool's Annotations.*

‡ In all probability it was at some relation's house, that this marriage was kept, because Mary was so solicitous for the supply of wine; and the opinion of the ancients is, that it was at the

invited next day to a marriage-feast in Cana \*, a small place in Galilee, not far from Nazareth. At this solemnity there happened to be a scarcity of wine, which when his mother understood, she made her application to him, in hopes that, by some means or other, he would not fail to supply the defect. In other Instances, no doubt, she had been made sensible of his supernatural power; and therefore (though his answer to her seems to carry in it the appearance of a denial) she still expected something extraordinary from him; and therefore ordered the waiters to obey his commands with the utmost exactness.

A. M.  
4934. &c.  
Ann. Dom  
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from the  
beginning  
of the Go-  
spels to  
Matt ix. 8.  
Mark ii.  
23 Luke  
vi. 1.



The custom of the Jews, in all their entertainments, was to use frequent washings; and for this purpose there were, in a certain private room, six water-cisterns, containing each about twenty gallons of our measure. These our Saviour commanded the servants to fill up to the brim, and when they had so done, to carry the liquor to the governor of the feast, for him to distribute to the rest of the company, as the manner then was. But when the governor had tasted it, he was not a little surprised; and calling to the bridegroom, told him, with a pleasant air, That, at most entertainments like this, it was an usual thing for people to bring out their best wine at first, and worse, when the guests had drank plentifully; but that he, contrary to the common custom, had reserved his best to the latter end of the feast.

This was the first miracle our Saviour did in any public manner, which proved both a manifestation of his own divinity, and a confirmation of his disciples faith. From Cana he went down to † Capernaum, the place where he usually

the house of Alphæus, otherwise named *Cleophas*, whose wife was Mary, the sister or cousin-german of the Blessed Virgin, and who, at this time, married his son Simon the Canaanite, Matth. x. 4 though others will have it, that the bridegroom was Nathaniel: *Calmet's Commentary* and *Whitby's Annotations*.

\* This is called *Cana of Galilee*, to distinguish it from another town of the same name, mentioned, Josh. xix. 28. belonging to the tribe of Asher, not far from the city of Sidon, and so situated much more north than this Cana was; *Well's Geography of the New Testament*.

† This city is nowhere mentioned in the Old Testament, either under this, or any name like it; and therefore it is not improbable, that it was one of those towns which the Jews built



A M. usually afterwards resided; but his stay at this time was  
 4034, &c. not long there, because his purpose was to go to Jerusa-  
 Ann Dom lem, at the approaching feast of the passover\*.

30, &c. As soon as our Saviour came to Jerusalem, the first  
 from the thing he did was to reform the public abuse and profa-  
 beginning nation of the temple, occasioned by the shops which mo-  
 of the Go- ney-changers had set up, and the beasts which the deal-  
 spels to ers  
 Matth ix. 8. Mark ii.  
 23. Luke  
 vi. 1.

built after their return from the Babylonish captivity It stood  
 The first on the sea-coast, *i. e. on the coast of the sea of Galilee, in the borders*  
 passover. of Zebulun and Naphtali, Matth. iv. 15, 16. and consequently  
 John ii. 15 towards the upper part thereof. It took its name, no doubt,  
 His clearing from an adjacent spring of great repute for its clear and limpid  
 the temple, waters, and which (according to Josephus) is by the natives  
 and work- called *Capernaum*. As this spring might be some inducement  
 ing many for the building of the town in the place where it stood, so its  
 miracles at being a convenient wafting place from Galilee to any parts on  
 Jerusalem. the other side of the sea, might be some motive to our Lord for  
 his moving from Nazareth, and making this the place of his  
 most constant residence. Upon this account Capernaum was  
 highly honoured, and is said by our Lord himself to be exalt-  
 ed unto heaven; but because it made no right use of this sig-  
 nal favour, it drew from him the severe denunciation, that it  
 should be brought down to hell, Matth. xi. 23. which has a-  
 bundantly been verified; for so far is it from being the metro-  
 polis of all Galilee, (as it was once,) that it consisted long since  
 of no more than six poor fishermen's cottages, and may per-  
 haps be now totally desolate; *Well's Geography of the New Test-  
 ament.*

\* This feast is so well known, and has been so fully explain-  
 ed at the time of its first institution, Exod. xii. that we need  
 only remind our reader, that, from the word *Pasach*, which  
 signifies to *leap* or *skip over*, the Jews gave the name of *Pascha*,  
 or *Passover*, to that great festival; which was annually appoint-  
 ed, in commemoration of their coming forth out of Egypt;  
 because the night before their departure, the destroying angel,  
 who slew the first-born of the Egyptians, passed over the houses  
 of the Israelites, which were marked with the blood of the  
 lamb, killed the evening before, and for this reason called the  
*paschal lamb*. The feast itself began on the fourteenth day of  
 Nisan, which is the first month in their sacred, but the seventh  
 in the civil year, and answers in part to our March and April;  
 but as the Jews began their days at six in the evening, this  
 feast was to continue seven days complete, and so ended on  
 the one and twentieth day in the evening; *Calmet's Dictionary*,  
 under the word.

ers therein used to bring into the court of the Gentiles \*. This our Lord's zeal for his Father's honour could not well brook; and therefore, with a scourge made of cords, he drove all the sellers † and barterers from the sacred ground, overturned the tables ‡ of the money-changers, and

A. M.  
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Ann. Dom.  
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from the  
beginning  
of the Go-  
spel 10  
Matth. ix.  
8. Mark ii.  
23. Luke  
vi. 1.

\* There were three courts belonging to the temple. The court of the priests, where the altar of incense stood: The court of the Israelites, where the Jews that were clean, and the proselytes of justice, *i. e.* those who had embraced circumcision, and the whole law of Moses, met at their devotions; and the court of the Gentiles, where the unclean Jew, and the Gentile, who owned the true God, without professing Judaism, were permitted to come and worship. Now, under the same pretext of having the sacrifices near at hand, as well as out of a contempt of that court, where the Gentile worshippers were permitted to enter, the priests, for their sordid gain, had permitted beasts and poultry to be brought within this court, and graziers and hucksters, (whose business properly was in the markets of Jerusalem,) to mix with people at their devotions, which was an abuse notoriously scandalous; *Whitby's Annotations*; and *Eachard's Ecclesiastical history*, chap. 3.

† It may possibly be asked, how our blessed Lord, with nothing but a whip in his hand, should be able to execute this heroic act upon a multitude of people, who might suffer damage in their wares, and consequently be in a disposition to resist him? Now, whoever, considers, that our Saviour had done enough already to prove himself a prophet sent from God, and that the general concession was, that a prophet thus sent had sufficient authority to rectify disorders; if he remembers at the same time, the great reverence that was constantly paid to the temple, and what titles of honour and respect were given it by God himself, cannot but allow, that the present abuse of it was abominable, our Saviour's zeal in redressing it commendable, and that, from all thinking and disinterested persons, it would consequently meet with countenance and approbation. Nor is it to be doubted, but that a consciousness of guilt in the profaners themselves might, in some measure, contribute to their submission and acquiescence, even in the same manner as his enemies were struck backwards with a sense of their own guilt, as well as the majesty of his appearance, and fell down to the ground, when they came to apprehend him in the garden, *John xviii. 6.*; *P's Annot.* and *Bishop Smallbrook's Vindication* p. 146.

‡ It was an appointment of the law that every man, from twenty years old and upwards, should annually pay into the treasury of the temple, in order to defray the expence of the daily sacrifices, the sum of half a shekel, *Exod. xxx. 12. 15.*

This,

A. M.  
4034 &c  
Ann Dom  
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from the  
beginning  
of the Go  
spels to

Matth ix.  
8. Mark ii.  
27. Luke  
vi. 1.

John ii. 18

and commanded those who dealt in doves or pigeons, to take away their goods, and make his Father's house no longer a house of merchandise.

This extraordinary procedure incensed the Jews to such a degree, that they came and demanded of him by what \* authority he did these things, and to give them some evidence of his having a commission so to do : But to this he made no other reply, than by foretelling his own resurrection, expressed in the metaphor of the temple, which they understood of the temple at Jerusalem, that had been †  
fix

This, and the voluntary oblations of people of all ranks occasioned a necessity of changing greater coin into less, and very often of foreign coin into that which was current in the nation. Under the pretence, therefore, of having things near at hand, the priests took this opportunity to gratify their covetousness, by letting out places to money-changers, who, to make up their rent, (which very likely was exorbitant,) might extort from those that came to them, or (as Origen imagines) give them ἀργύριον ἀδόκιμον, *base money* instead of good, and so made the temple a den of thieves ; *Whitby's Annot. on Matth. xxi. 13.*

\* Whether it were the priests, the magistrates, or the common people, that put this question to our Saviour, it is certain, that they do not in the least pretend to justify the profanation which he had thus reformed; and therefore their principle seems to have been, ' That, let the corruptions and abuses in a church be never so great, yet they were not to be reformed, but either by the ordinary authority of the magistrate or by an extraordinary authority from God. Such an authority they were ready to acknowledge in prophets; but then they expected that those who pretended to this and to have their mission from God, should be able to prove that mission by some miraculous operations.' But how they came to put this question to our Lord, after they had seen his miracles, and knew that he claimed a divine commission, and had told them, *that the works he had done in his Father's name bore witness of him*, John v. 36. can be imputed to nothing but their perverseness, and obstinate infidelity ; *Pool's Annotations.*

† From Herod's beginning to rebuild the temple, to this first passover after our Saviour's baptism, it is agreed, that the time was exactly six and forty years; but then Josephus Antiq. lib. 15. c. 14. tells us, that the whole was finished in nine years and an half. But this is to be understood of the general building only, since (according to the same author, lib. 20. c. 8.) several new works and decorations were still carrying on and near eighteen thousand men employed therein, even to the time that young Agrippa was made king of Judea, which was about the sixtieth year of the Christian æra; *Calmet's Commentary; and Beausobre's Annotations.*



six and forty years a-building, but he, of the temple \* of his own body, which in three days after they had slain it, he promised to revive. Though therefore at this time he refused to work any miracle at the instigation of the Jews, yet, shortly after, we find him working many, which surprised the whole city, and excited the curiosity of one person in particular, whose name was Nicodemus, (a considerable man in the Sanhedrim, and of the sect of the Pharisees,) to repair to him, (but privately, and in the night-time, for fear of being known,) and to declare freely to him, 'that he verily believed he was to come immediately from heaven, because the miracles † which he wrought were a demonstration of it.'

‡ Hereupon our Blessed Saviour took occasion to let him know, that this belief was not the only qualification requisite to become his disciple, and then proceeded to instruct

\* The Jews had a maxim, or proverbial speech among them, that 'the sanctuary of sanctuaries was the Messiah,' and therefore there could be no impropriety in our Saviour's calling his body a *temple*; for if the apostle calls our bodies *the temple of God*, as he does, 1 Cor. iii. 16. and 2 Cor. vi. 16. how much more does that title belong to the body of Christ, in which the fulness of the Godhead dwelt always, and inseparably? *Pool's* and *Beausobre's Annotations*.

† But are miracles alone a demonstration of a person's being sent by God? Nicodemus was not ignorant of the caution which Moses had given the Jews against false prophets, Deut. xii. 1. &c.; nor does he here speak of miracles in general, but of those particular ones which Jesus had done in the time of the passover: and these were so great in their nature, so solid in their proof, so beneficial in their effects, and in their end so well designed to confirm a doctrine every way suitable to the divine attributes, and to fulfil the prophecies concerning the Messiah, the Sun of Righteousness, who was to rise with healing in his wings, Mal. iv. 2. that there was the greatest assurance that none, without an omnipotent hand, could do them. Not to say that Nicodemus might have both examined the doctrine, and enquired into the life of Jesus, before he made that inference from his miracles; *Pool's Annotations*; and *Calmet's Commentary*.

‡ Some have imagined, from the seeming abruptness of the answer which our Lord gives Nicodemus, that Nicodemus might have put some previous question to him, (not recorded by the evangelist,) concerning the means of attaining the kingdom of God, *i. e.* eternal happiness, or of qualifying himself to be a disciple of the Messiah; for in that sense the kingdom

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8. Mark ii.  
23. Luke  
vi. 1.

His d.f.  
course with  
Nicodemus  
concerning  
regeneration,  
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struct him in the great mystery of regeneration, telling him,  
 ' That, as no production could transcend the nature and  
 ' condition of its parent, flesh, for instance, though never  
 ' so much diversified, could still produce no more than  
 ' flesh; so this formation of a new creature was to be ef-  
 ' fected by different principles, namely, by the water of  
 ' baptism † washing away sins, and by the Holy Spirit,  
 giving

dom of God is likewise taken. But (besides that the the term  
*answered* does not always in the New Testament, signify a re-  
 ply to a question already propounded, but very frequently no  
 more than the beginning of a new speech) the connection be-  
 tween the compliment which Nicodemus makes our Lord, and  
 our Lord's reply to it, will not be amiss, if we can but suppose  
 in the words this implication:—' Thy acknowledgement of  
 ' my divine mission and authority, free and generous though it  
 ' be, will not be sufficient to render thee a member of that king-  
 ' dom which I am going to set up; for, except a man be born  
 ' again, *i. e.* renewed in his mind, will, and affections, by the  
 ' operation of the Holy Ghost, and so become a new creature,  
 ' he cannot see the kingdom of God *i. e.* he cannot be a Chri-  
 ' stian here, or a saint hereafter;' *P's. W's. and H's. Annotations.*

† Those who make the water and the spirit, here mention-  
 ed by our Saviour, one and the same thing, (which to every  
 common reader, must, at first sight, appear to be distinct,) would  
 do well to consider, that the question between Christ and Ni-  
 codemus was about what was requisite to prepare a man for the  
 kingdom, *i. e.* God's church, and make him partaker of the go-  
 spel-blessing. Certain it is, that baptism by water was not only  
 the common method of receiving proselytes into the Jewish  
 church, but it is declared likewise by our Lord himself to be  
 the ordinary way of entering into his kingdom; *for he that be-  
 lieveth, and is baptized, says he, shall be saved,* Mark xvi. 16; and  
 therefore he gave commission to his apostles to make disciples  
 in all nations by baptizing them, Matth. xxviii. 19. Nay, so  
 far are the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit from supersced-  
 ing the necessity of this ordinance, that, in the apostolic age,  
 we find them rather esteemed a proper predisposition for it:  
 For, when the Holy Ghost fell upon Cornelius and his com-  
 pany, in the same manner that it fell upon the apostles on the  
 day of Pentecost, Acts ii. 1. what is St Peter's inference from  
 these miraculous gifts? Is it that the persons on whom they  
 rested had no need of baptism? No: but rather, that these  
 extraordinary gifts were a full evidence, that they were the  
 proper objects of it: *for, can any one, says he, forbid water, that  
 these should not be baptized?* So far is the baptism of the Spirit  
 (even where it is undeniable) from excluding the baptism of  
 water,

‘giving a power and efficacy to men’s endeavours to do well; which Spirit bloweth where it listeth, and is as the wind, certain and notorious in its effects, but secret in the principle and manner of its production.’

‘This doctrine of regeneration (which to Nicodemus † seemed so very abstruse) ‘our Saviour proceeds to tell him ‘was no more, in respect of other mysteries of the gospel, ‘than the earth is in comparison of the heavens; and so ‘goes on to acquaint him with matters of a more sublime ‘nature; with his descent from heaven, his death, his ascension, and the blessing of that redemption which he ‘came into the world to accomplish. He instructs them in ‘the love of the Father, the mission of the Son, the rewards of faith, and the glories of eternity. He upbraids ‘the unbelieving and impenitent, and declares the difference between a pure and corrupt conscience, the shame and fears of the one, and the confidence and serenity of ‘the other.’

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23. Luke  
vi. 1.

‘This is the substance of our Saviour’s discourse to Nicodemus, who afterwards became a convert; and no sooner was the passover ended, but our Lord, in company with many of his disciples, who, by his miraculous works, were convinced of his divinity, went about the province

John’s  
third testi-  
mony con-  
cerning our  
Saviour,  
and his be-  
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of prison.

water, and so strong a proof is the instance before us, that the graces of the Spirit may be the foundation of a just claim to baptism, but never (where the sacrament can be had) a lawful dispensation to any man for the refusal or neglect of it; *Whitby’s Annotations*; and *Stanhope on the epistles and gospels*, vol. 3.

† Our blessed Saviour might well wonder at Nicodemus’s ignorance in the point of regeneration, when this was the common notion of proselytism among the Jews, that he who was washed and circumcised, was looked upon as a *recens natus*, an infant new-born: And where there were so many passages, in the law and the prophets, relating to this very doctrine; for what else can the meaning be of the circumcision of the heart, commanded by Moses, Deut. x. 16. of the renewal of a clean and right spirit, prayed for by David, Psal. li. 10. of the putting God’s law in the inward parts, mentioned by Jeremiah. chap. xxxi. 33. and the giving his people a new heart, and a new spirit, promised by God, Ezek. xxxvi. 26.? These, and many more, were intimations of the doctrine of regeneration; but the Pharisees were so taken up with their rites and traditions, that they gave small attention to the spiritual things of nearer and much greater concernment to their souls; *Pool’s* and *Beaufobre’s Annotations*.



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John iii. 23

of Judea \*, making profelytes where-ever he came, and causing them to be baptised by the hands of his disciples, because himself was employed in greater affairs, viz. in teaching the people, and relieving their necessities.

John the Baptist had, at this time, removed his station from Bethabara to Ænon, a place remarkable (as it name imports) for springs and waters, and therefore of great conveniency for baptizing. While he was there, a dispute happened to arise between his disciples and certain Jews, who were present, which of the baptisms, that of John, or that of Jesus, was preferable? And when his disciples, by way of appeal to John, came, and acquainted him, that the person, of whom he had given such honourable testimony, received profelytes (and that in vast numbers) by the same ceremony of baptism as he did, John repeated the same testimony again, and reminded his disciples, how frequently he had told them, 'That the person of whom they spake, was the Messiah, whom God had sent into the world for the salvation of mankind, and himself no more than his herald; and that his ministry therefore was now going to decline, even as, upon the approach of the sun, the glory of the morning-star decreases.' And having said many things of the like nature to prove Jesus to be the Son of God, and of co-equal with the Father, he closed up his commission with these important words, *He that believes on the Son, hath everlasting life; but he that believeth not on the Son, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.*

Mat. xiv. 3.  
Mark vi. 17.  
Luke iii. 19.

John was at this time in the territories of Herod Antipas †, and, as he was a man of great freedom of speech upon

\* The evangelist does no where mention the particular place where our Saviour began his baptism; but there is reason to presume, that it was somewhere about Jericho, because there it was, that John the Baptist first entered upon his ministry; because it seems expedient, that he should open the first scene of his office where his faithful forerunner had given such glorious and advantageous testimonies of him. and, in one and the same place, complete John's baptism of repentance for sins, (which was preparatory to his coming.) by the baptism of remission of sins, which he alone had proper power to give; *Calmet's Commentary.*

† This Antipas, or Antipater, for they are words of the same signification, was the son of Herod the Great, by one of his wives,

upon all occasions, he was not afraid, when he came to Herod's court, to reprove him for his many enormities, and particularly, for his cohabiting with Herodias \*, the wife of his brother Philip, who was still living. This exasperated

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wives, named Cleopatra, a native of Jerusalem. In his first will his father (as was said before) named him successor to his kingdom; but afterwards he changed his mind, made his son Archelaus king of Judea, and gave to Antipas the title only of *Tetrach of Galilee and Petrea*, which made him appeal to Augustus at Rome, in order to have his father's former will confirmed, and the latter reversed; but he did not obtain his end; *Joseph. Antiq.*

\* This woman was the daughter of Aristobulus and Bernice, sister to King Agrippa and grand-daughter to Herod the Great. She was at first married to her uncle Philip, son of the same Herod by Mariamne, by whom she had a daughter named Salome, the same who pleased Herod so well in her dancing; and how she came to run from one brother to live with another, Josephus has thus related the story.—Antipas, in his passage to Rome, made some stay with his brother Philip, where he fell so passionately in love with his wife Herodias, that he could not forbear expressing it to her, and promised her withal, that, at his return from Rome, he would put away his own wife, and marry her. Upon these conditions Herodias accepted of the offer, and, as soon as Antipas was returned, and his wife gone, (for she, having notice of the engagement between her husband and Herodias, made her escape to her father Areta king of Petrea,) she, with her daughter Salome, left her husband Philip, and coming directly to Antipas, for ever after lived with him in a state of incest, Lev. xviii. 15. Nor was her ambition much less criminal than her lust: For, growing uneasy to see her brother Agrippa promoted to the title of a king, while her new husband Antipas had no more than that of a tetrach, she pressed him so much, that he determined to make a journey to Rome, with an intention to ask the like dignity of Caligula the emperor; but the emperor, being prejudiced by several letters, which Agrippa had written against Antipas, instead of advancing him, deprived him of his tetrarchy, and condemned him to perpetual banishment. The emperor, however understanding that Herodias was Agrippa's sister, shewed an inclination to pardon her; but she chose rather to follow her husband in the calamity she had brought upon him, than to owe any thing to her brother's fortune: so that they were both confiscated, and banished together, first into France, and afterwards into Spain, where they died; *Jewish Antiq. lib. 8. c. 9.*

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John iv. 1.

asperated the woman against him to such a degree, that, though Herod at first had some esteem and reverence for him, yet, by her malicious instigations \*, she prevailed with him to cast him into prison, with a purpose to have him destroyed, whenever he could find out a proper opportunity.

About the time of John's imprisonment, our Lord, who, by the hands of his apostles †, had been baptizing for near seven or eight months in Judea, understanding that the Pharisees began to be envious at him for the great multitudes of people that resorted to him, resolved to leave that province, and pass into ‡ Galilee, in order to enter upon the

\* The evangelists have assigned the true reason for the Baptist's imprisonment. But since the Pharisees, very probably, represented him as an author of a new sect, a promoter of seditions and rebellions, and a person dangerous to the government, by reason of the multitude of his followers, Antipas craftily made that his pretence (as appears from Josephus, lib. 18. c. 7.) for confining him; and the better to remove him from the people, sent him bound out of Galilee, into Petrea, to a strong castle, called *Machærus*, near the Dead sea, and towards the borders of Arabia, where he continued above a year in prison; *Eachard's Ecclesiastical History*, c. 3.

† Several reasons may be assigned, why our Saviour delegated the office of baptizing to his apostles. 1. Because it was no wise proper for him to baptize in his own name. 2. Because the baptism that was peculiarly his was the baptism of the Holy Ghost, Acts xi. 16. 3. Because it was an office of more importance, to preach the gospel than to baptize, 1 Cor. i. 17. And, 4. Because Christ's baptizing of any might possibly have occasioned disgusts and jealousies among the disciples, in the same manner as, in the early ages of the church, we find people valuing themselves and despising others, upon their being baptized by such or such an eminent apostle, 1 Cor. i. 12.; *Beausobre's Annotations*.

‡ It is a province of Palestine, which extends itself chiefly into the northern parts thereof. The tribes which it contains, are Issachar, Zebulun, Naphtali, and Asher, with part (as some say) of Dan, and Peræa, beyond the Jordan. On the north, it is bounded by Lebanon and Syria; on the west, by Phœnicia; on the south by Samaria; and on the east mostly by the river Jordan, and the sea of Galilee. It is generally divided into two parts, the Upper and the Lower Galilee, whereof the former is called *Galilee of the Gentiles*, Matth. iv. 15. either because it was chiefly possessed by the Gentiles, with Jews interspersed among them, or rather because it bordered upon Gentile nations, such as the Phœnicians, Syrians, and Arabians. The whole country (according to Josephus) was fruitful, and

well



the more solemn part of his ministerial function. In this journey it was necessary for him to pass through Samaria \*; and, as he travelled on foot, and the weather was hot, when he came within a little of † Sychar, he sent his disciples in to the city to buy provisions, and sat himself down by the side of a famous well, called *Jacob's well* ‡.

well cultivated, and the people laborious and industrious. The number of its towns and villages was prodigious great, and so well inhabited, that the least of them did not contain less than fifteen thousand souls. The natives were a bold intrepid race of men, who defended themselves bravely against the foreign nations that surrounded them; but then their wealth and prowess made them seditious, and very apt to rebel against the Romans, for which they sometimes suffered very much; *Whitby's Alphabetical table.*

\* It is a province of Palestine, (so called from its city of the same name, that was once the capital of the kingdom of Israel,) which lies exactly between Judea to the south, and Galilee to the north, and extends itself from the Mediterranean sea westward, to the river Jordan eastward, taking up the most considerable part of what formerly belonged to the tribe of Ephraim, and the half tribe of Manasseh, on the west side of Jordan: *Well's Geography of the New Testament.*

† Sychar is only a corrupt pronunciation of Sychem, or Shechem, which is the capital of the country that was once called *Samaria*. At present it is called *Naplosa*, and stands in a narrow valley, between Mount Gerizzim on the south, (at the foot of which it is situate,) and Ebal on the north. On Mount Gerizzim they had once a temple, which seemed to rival that of Jerusalem; but in the time of the Maccabees, it was destroyed by Hyrcanus, and what they have now is only a little place of worship, to which, at certain seasons, they nevertheless repair for the performance of the rites of their religion; but what those rites are, it is not easy to say. The whole place, in short, is strangely decayed from what it was anciently; for it consists only of two streets, that lie parallel under Mount Gerizzim, but is full of inhabitants, and the seat of a Bassa; *Well's Geography of the New Testament.*

‡ It is much to be questioned, whether the well that is at present shewn to travellers as Jacob's well, be that where our Saviour discoursed the Samaritan woman, because it seems to be too remote from the town for women to come thither to draw water; unless we may suppose, that the city did formerly extend itself farther that way than it does now. However this be, the well is at present covered with a small vault, into which you get down by a very straight hole, and then removing a broad flat stone, you discover the mouth of the well itself.

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Matt. ix, 8.  
Mark ii. 23.  
Luke vi. 1.

On Sav-  
our's dis-  
course with  
the woman  
at Jacob's  
well.

While he was sitting there, a woman of a loose life and conversation came out of the city to draw water; and when he requested some of her to drink, she, perceiving that he was a Jew, took the freedom to ask him, how he could offer any such request to a Samaritan, since there were so great feuds, and so little dealings \* between them and the Jews? Little did the woman know the excellency of the person who asked her so small a favour; but in some measure to convince her, our Lord took occasion from hence, under the metaphor of water, to discourse to her of spiritual blessings; and, to make her sensible of his omniscience, he reminded her of some passages of her life, particularly of the † five times she had been divorced for her

self. It is dug in a firm rock, about three yards in diameter, and thirty five in depth; and to confute the story, which is commonly told to travellers, (*viz.* that it is all the year dry, except on the anniversary, when our Saviour Sat upon it, but that then it bubbles up with abundance of water) Mr Maundrell tells us, that when they came to found it, they found no less than five yards of water in it; *Journey from Aleppo to Jerusalem*; and *Well's Geography of the New Testament*.

\* The chief reasons of the Jewish hatred against the Samaritans were these three: 1<sup>st</sup>, The foreign extraction of the Samaritans, they being most of them descendents from the Cutheans, whom Salmanazar sent to Samaria, when he carried away the ten tribes into captivity, 2 Kings xviii 9. 2<sup>dly</sup> The difference of their religion and worship, forasmuch as that of the Samaritans was a kind of mixture of Jewish and Pagan rites together; and, 3<sup>dly</sup>, The rival temple which the Samaritans had built on Mount Gerizzim, and consecrated to Jupiter Olympius, in order to avoid the persecution of Antiochus; *Josephus Antiq. lib. 12. c. 2*. These were the chief causes of the animosities between them. The Jews, however, did not carry their resentment so high, but that, in some cases, they would traffic or buy any thing of them; but then the Pharisees came in with a tradition, that they were not to borrow any thing of them, or receive any kindness from them, nor drink of their water, nor eat of their morsels. This however, our Lord despised, as having no foundation either in the law of God, or equity, and as tending to impair the law of common friendship and humanity; and therefore we find him asking to drink with the Samaritan woman, and afterwards going into the city and eating with the Schehemites; *Beausobre's and Whitby's Annot.*

† The words of the text are, *thou hast had five husbands*; but whether five successively, and after the death of one another or five from whom she had been divorced for adultery, is not agreed.

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her adulteries, and of the state of fornication wherein she then lived.

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Mark ii. 13.  
Luke vi. 1.

Convinced by this discovery that he was a prophet, she propounded to him the great question so much controverted between the Jews and Samaritans, viz. Which was the proper place of public worship, Gerizzim or Jerusalem? To which our Saviour, in his answer, gives manifestly the preference to the Jewish form and place of worship; but makes it a question of no great moment, since the time was approaching when all sacrifices and ceremonial rites should cease, and when God, who is a spirit, expected to be worshipped in a more † rational and spiritual manner, than hitherto he had been.

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The most modern interpreters, however, judge that she had been married to five several men, but so behaved herself towards them, that for her adultery, or some other froward behaviour they had given her a bill of divorce. This seems more likely to be the true sense, than that, after the death of five legal husbands, she should live in whoredom with a sixth person; *Pool's Annotations.*

† The Jews gave out, that the Samaritans worshipped God in the image of a dove; but this seems to be a mere forgery on them, 1<sup>st</sup> Because among all the idols which they worshipped when they came from Assyria, there is not the least hint of the image of a dove. 2<sup>dly</sup>, Because Josephus, who, in several places of his history, inveighs against them bitterly, does no where charge them with this crime. And, 3<sup>dly</sup>, Because it is a thing utterly inconsistent with the law of Moses, which they embraced; for, as it forbids all images, so it requires men to sacrifice the dove to God; and surely nothing can be more absurd, than to worship that which we are bound to sacrifice. It is very likely, therefore that the Samaritans had no false objects of worship among them, and yet they, as well as the Jews, might not be furnished with right apprehensions of the true one. They both were to blame, no doubt, in confining the worship of God to any particular place, and thinking that he could not be rightly adored, but either at Gerizzim, according to the one, or at Jerusalem, according to the other, when his presence is certainly every where, and in every nation, *he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him, Acts x. 35.* They, as well as the Jews, might think that God was pleased with outward ordinances, with sacrifices and expiations, which sanctified only to the purifying of the flesh; but perhaps they never supposed that these things were but types and figures of what was to succeed, and therefore to be of no longer continuance, than until the substance of the things themselves were come. They doubtless both had some expectations of a Messiah; but perhaps

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Our Saviour, before he had done talking with the woman, and just as his disciples were returned from the city, had informed her, that himself was the <sup>m</sup> Messiah, whom she spoke of; whereupon, leaving her water-pots, she ran into the city, proclaiming aloud, that she had met with a person, who had told her all the secrets of her life, and who could be no other than that great prophet who was to come into the world; so that the inhabitants waited on him at the well, invited him into their city, received him with great civility; and though some believed on him from the testimony of the woman, many more did so, from their own conviction, in hearing his sermons and divine discourses

John iv. 46.  
His curing  
the noble-  
man's son,  
which con-  
verted his  
family.

After two days stay in the city, our Lord proceeded to Cana, where he had changed the water into wine, and where the Galileans, who at the passover had seen the miracles which he did at Jerusalem, received him with great kindness and respect. Hither it was that an officer belonging to the court came, and addressed himself to him with great humility and reverence, desiring him that he would come and cure his son, who was just at the point of death; and when, with more importunity, he renewed his request, and our Lord, to shew the excellency of his power, that could cure in absence as well as presence, dismissed him with this assurance, that his son was restored to health; the believing father joyfully returning home, was by the way congratulated with the welcome news of his son's recovery; and inquiring of his servants the hour when the child began to amend, by the account which they gave him, he perceived that it was at the very instant that Jesus had declared to him, *thy son is well*: where-

upon

it never entered into their heads, that he should be the angel of the covenant, who, with the incense of his blood, *should offer up the prayers of all the saints upon the altar that is before the throne*, Rev. viii. 3. So that our Saviour, by this part of his discourse with the woman, plainly intimates, that after his resurrection, and the promulgation of his gospel, not only the Jews and Samaritans, but the people of all nations whatever, should have righter notions of God, the only object of religious worship, of the extent and universality of his church, of the qualifications requisite in true worshippers, and of the Mediator appointed by God to introduce and inforce their prayers: *Whitby's Annotations, and Calmet's Commentary.*

<sup>m</sup> Her words are, *I know that the Messiah cometh, who is called Christ*, John iv. 25.

upon both he, and his whole family, being convinced of our Saviour's divinity, were converted to the Christian faith.

The imprisonment of John had put an end to his ministry; and therefore, to supply that loss, our Saviour himself began to preach the sum and substance of the gospel, faith, hope, and repentance, in the province of Galilee; and this he did in such an extraordinary manner, that he was admired by all, and his fame spread through the whole country. Coming however to Nazareth, the place of his education, he went into the synagogue \* on the Sabbath-day, and when he † stood up, and read (as the custom for

A. M.  
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30, &c.  
from the  
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he Go-  
spels to  
Matth. ix.  
8 Mark ii.  
23, Luke  
vi. 1.

Luke iv.  
14. His  
base usage  
at Naza-  
reth, and  
removal to  
Capernaum

\* That the synagogue-worship was, at this time, loaded with rites and ceremonies of human invention. that the priests were very defective in the discharge of their functions, and the manners of those who met there very much corrupted, no one can doubt, who is at all acquainted with the Scriptures, and the Jewish history; and yet, we find, that our Saviour and his disciples (as members of the church of Nazareth) went constantly every Sabbath day to these synagogues, preserving thereby *the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace*, and not upon slight pretences, *forsaking the assembling of themselves together*, as the manner of some is, Heb. x. 25.; *Whitby's Annotations*.

† What the nature and design of synagogues were, and, at what time, and upon what occasion. they were at first erected by the Jews, we have, in a particular dissertation, already discussed, and need only take notice, that though every synagogue had a settled reader, to whom was allowed an annual stipend, yet, when any grave and learned person came in, (especially if he was a stranger,) it was customary to make him the compliment of reading the portion of Scripture appointed for the day, Acts xiii. 15, which he always did in a standing posture. For, as the law was given with reverence, say the Jews. so it is to be handled with reverence; and, when he had read what he thought fit, he might, if he was so disposed and qualified, expound, or comment upon it. The character which John the Baptist had given of our Saviour, and the miracles which he had lately done in Cana and Capernaum, might possibly excite the curiosity of the master of the synagogue to hear him read, and expound; read in Hebrew, and expound in Chaldee, as Ezra had introduced the custom. In reading the law, people were confined to the lesson of the day; but the Rabbins have observed, that, in reading the prophets, there was a greater license allowed; and therefore, though our Saviour might read just where the book opened, yet there seems to be a good deal of the hand of God in directing him to a place which related to himself, and gave him so fair an opportunity of declar-

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23. Luke  
vi. i.

laymen was at that time) a passage in the prophet Isaiah, beginning with these words, <sup>n</sup> *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor, &c.* which he applied to himself, (but in general terms,) and spake thereupon with so much gracefulness, that the eyes of the whole congregation were turned upon him, admiring his discourse; many who had known him in the disadvantages of his education, began to have abject thoughts of him upon the meanness of his extract, as if he had been no more than a carpenter's son; so that his taking an occasion to upbraid them with their ingratitude and insensibility, so far provoked the whole assembly, that they hurried him out of the city, and brought him to the brow of the hill on which it was built, with a design to have \* cast him down from thence, and destroyed him, had not he, by a miraculous power †, withdrawn himself from the fury of these wretched people, and left their city.

This barbarous treatment of the Nazarenes made our Saviour remove from them, and settle his habitation in Capernaum

ing the purpose of his coming into the world viz. to publish redemption and liberty pardon and reconciliation with God; *Beausobre's Annotations, and Calmet's Commentary.*

<sup>n</sup> Isaiah, lxi. 1.

\* Such kinds of popular executions were sometimes tolerated. and, under pretence of zeal for the law, several were put to death, (especially in times of public calamity. and when the Jews were in their greatest distress Joseph De bell. jud. lib 5.) without the formality of justice. But what made the Nazarenes so exceeding outrageous against our Saviour was. his declaring them unworthy of the miracles he had done at Capernaum. his equalizing himself to some of the greatest of the ancient prophets, and, by the instances of the Sidonian woman, and Naaman the Syrian. plainly intimating, that his gospel should chiefly be received by the Gentiles; *Calmet's Commentary, and Whitby's Annotations*

† How he got out of their hands, when they had laid hold of him, the Scripture does not tell us; nor is it our concern to be curious to enquire. We know very well, that it was an easy thing for him, who was God as well as man, to quit himself of any mortal enemies: But how he did it, whether it was by blinding them for the present, or making himself invisible, or merely by allaying their rage, and changing their wills, it is impossible to determine. Which way soever he did it. it was certainly something miraculous, and therefore deprived the Nazarenes of the liberty of complaining that he had done no miracles among them; *Pool's Annotations, and Calmet's Commentary.*



Capernaum, which was the metropolis of Galilee, and by reason of the lake \*, which was near it, a place highly convenient for his designs. He had not long been here before great multitudes flocked to him; and as he was walking one day by the side of the lake, with a crowd of people pressing upon him, he saw two fishing vessels †, one belonging to Peter and Andrew, and the other to James and

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beginning  
of the Go-  
pols to  
Mat. ix. 2.  
Mark ii. 23.  
Luke vi. 1.

\* This lake, which (according to Josephus) is forty furlongs in breadth, and in length an hundred, was, in the times of the Old Testament, called *the Sea of Chinnereth* Numb xxxiv 11. but the writers of the New have given it three different appellations. For as it is called *the Sea of Galilee*, from the province of Galilee in general, so is it called *the Sea of Tiberias*, from a town of that name, standing on the western shore, and *the Lake of Genesareth*, from that particular tract of Galilee which bounded it a great way, on the western side. The lake lies upon a gravel which makes its water both of a good colour and taste. It is softer than either fountain or river water, and withal so very cold that it will not grow warm though set in the sun in the hottest season of the year. The river Jordan runs through the midst of it, which stocks it with a great variety of fish, of a peculiar taste and shape, not to be equalled in any other place. In short, it was a common saying among the Jews, that 'God loved the sea of Galilee more than any other sea,' which holds so far good that this sea, above all others was honoured with the divine presence of our Blessed Saviour, while he dwelt at Capernaum very frequently, and even once, after he was arisen from the dead; *Well's Geography of the New Testament*.

Mat. iv 13.  
Luke iv.  
31. Mat. iv.  
18. Mark i.  
16 Luke  
v. 1.

† St Matthew and St Mark, in their relations of this transaction, are pretty uniform; but St Luke differs from them so widely, that interpreters have been at some pains to reconcile them. For, whereas the two former tell us, that these fishermen were casting a net into the sea. St Luke informs us, that they were gone out of their ships and had washed their nets, besides some other variation in the manner of the call of the four apostles. But not to enter into a minute examination of particulars, we ought to consider, that some allowances are reasonable, and necessary to be made for the variation of circumstances in one historian, who makes it his business to recount matters distinctly, and at large, and in another, whose intention it is, only to declare facts in general, without entering into the series and order of each action. Now, this is the case of the two former evangelists, They designed no more than a summary account of these four apostles call, and their compliance with it; and therefore they contented them-

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8. Mark ii.  
23, Luke  
vi. 1

The won-  
derful  
draught of  
fishes  
which a-  
mazed St  
Peter.

and John, (who were all partners and companions in that business,) and stepping into Peter's ship, he desired him to put a little from the shore, that from thence he might preach to the people.

Peter and his companions had been hard at work all night, but without any manner of success; and therefore, when sermon was ended, and our Saviour ordered Peter to launch out further, and to let down his nets for a draught, he modestly told him of their unsuccessful toiling all night, but, nevertheless, in obedience to him, he was willing: Nor had he cause to repent; for, upon letting down the nets, they inclosed such a multitude of fishes, that their tackle began to break, so that they were forced to call to their partners in the other ship, to come to their assistance, because the draught was such that it loaded both the vessels so very deep, that they were in some danger of sinking before they got to shore.

Amazed at this marvellous sight, and dreading the visible appearance of so great and so divine a power just by him, Peter threw himself down at our Saviour's feet, desiring him \* to depart from him, because he was a per-  
son

selves with setting down a part, so much first, as relates to Andrew and Peter, and afterwards what related to James and John. But St Luke, who proposes to shew the manner, and whole process of the call, records the miracle at large, and interweaves several remarkable passages, which were not needful to be mentioned in the brief account of St Matthew and St Mark, but highly conducive to St. Luke's purpose of undertaking to describe the miraculous draught of fishes, (Luke v. 10.) which, upon our Lord's command to make a fresh experiment, was taken; *Stanhope on the epistles and gospels, vol. 3.*

\* We have several instances, both in the Old and New Testament, of persons struck with dreadful apprehensions at the presence of the divine Majesty, or even of some angel or a prophet delivering a message from him. And therefore Grotius supposes, that Peter's case was much the same with that of the widow of Sarepta, when she complained to Elijah, *What have I to do with thee, O thou man of God, art thou come unto me to call my sins to remembrance?* 1 Kings xvii. 18. But others more justly think, that Peter's words are expressive, rather of his high sentiments of our Lord, and the consciousness of his own unworthiness to be found in such a person's company, and that therefore they do not a little resemble that glorious declaration of the centurion in the gospel, *Lord, I am not worthy, that thou shouldest come under my roof, but speak the word only,*

son no ways worthy of his presence. But our Saviour bid him be of good comfort, and from the present incident, took occasion to inform him, that he had a nobler work and employment for him, even the † gaining of men's souls to salvation, if he would adjoin himself to him; and having given the like invitation to the other three, Andrew, James, and John, they all obeyed his call, and leaving their vessels, nets, relations, and employment, || became ever after his constant and inseparable disciples.

After

*only, and my servant shall be healed, Matth. viii. 8.; Calmet's Commentary; and Pool's Annotations.*

† The words in our translation are, *From henceforth thou shalt catch men*, but in the Greek ἀπὸ τῆ νῦν ἀνδράπους ἐσθι ζῶντων, there is something very remarkable. For it does not say, that Peter should catch men, as people generally do wild beasts or fishes, in order to kill them, and eat them; but that he should take them alive, as such fish and wild creatures are taken that are designed to be put in stews and parks; and therefore the sense of the word is, — *Thou shalt be a fisher of men*, but such a fisher, as shall preserve them alive; as shall retrieve them, in short, from error and ignorance, and death; and conduct them to truth, and knowledge, and eternal life; *Hammond's Paraphrase; and Calmet's Commentary.*

|| Towards the conclusion of the first chapter of St John's gospel, we meet with a call of some five of our Lord's disciples, about a year prior to this; but, by the account of the other evangelists, it appears that they did not, at this time, become our Saviour's constant attendants, because it is presumable, that though he took this opportunity to make himself known to them, yet he had not as yet any immediate occasion for them, and therefore remitted them to their respective trades. Only Philip is supposed to have retained to him from the very first, because he seems to have called him in a formal manner, as he did not, at that time, the rest, John i. 43; and because we find no further interview between him and Philip. upon this score, as there was between him and three, at least, of the rest, Luke v. 10, 11. These three disciples, therefore, viz. Andrew, Peter, and John, were twice called; but the former calling was rather a warning to hold themselves in readiness for it, than an actual engaging them in his service; but now in Philip, we meet with no other call than what he had at first; and therefore, though the fathers, and some ancient writers, have given the honour to St Andrew, of being the first disciple; yet that prerogative is evidently St Philip's. For tho' Andrew and Peter were the first that came and conversed with our Lord, yet we find them returning to their trades again,



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of the Go-  
spels to  
Math ix.  
3. Mark ii.  
23. Luke  
vi. 1.

After the choice of these four disciples, our Saviour re-  
turned with them into the city; and, on the next Sabbath-  
day, went into the chief synagogue, and there preached to  
the people, with so much force and authority, and in a  
manner so widely different from their usual teachers the  
Scribes \*, that all were astonished at him; and to increase  
their admiration, one in the congregation, whose body  
was possessed with an unclean spirit †, cried out in an  
hideous manner, *Let us alone, what have we to do with thee,*  
*thou*

Mark i 23.  
Luke iv. 33.  
His cure of  
th demon-  
iac in the  
synagogue,  
and of Pe-  
ter's wife's  
mother at  
her house,  
&c.

gain, and not ordained to their discipleship, till after the time  
that the Baptist was cast into prison; *Beausobre's Annot* and  
*Calmet's Commentary*; and *Howell's History*, book 2. in the notes.

\* There are several opinions wherein the excellency of  
Christ's preaching, above that of the Jewish doctors, did con-  
sist. Some think, that his teaching was not so much in the man-  
ner of an instructor, as a legislator, and one, who, in his own  
name, had power to propound the terms of life and death. But  
though this, in relation to Christ's divinity, be certainly true,  
yet it is not so agreeable, either to his prophetic office, or his  
frequent declarations, 'that the doctrine which he taught was  
'not his own, but his who sent him; and that he spake not of  
'himself, but as his Father had commanded him,' John vii 16.  
and xi. 51. Others imagine, that the excellency of Christ's  
preaching consisted in the miracles wherewith he confirmed his  
doctrine; for so the evangelist represents the matter: *They all  
 marvelled saying, What new doctrine is this? For with authority he  
 commandeth the unclean spirits, and they obey him,* Mark i 27. But  
because another evangelist tells us, that it was his doctrine,  
without his miracles, that astonished the people, Matt vii 29.  
others are of opinion, that his excellency lay in the graceful  
and lively manner of his delivery, not like the teachers of the  
Jews, who read their lectures of the law so coldly, so perfunct-  
orily, as never to affect the hearts of their hearers; and that,  
in short, he spake as a prophet, who had a full commission from  
God to deliver his message to them; not as the Scribes, who  
pretended only to deliver the traditions of their forefathers;  
*Whitby's and Pool's Annotations.*

† Those who are minded to depreciate our Saviour's mira-  
cles will needs persuade us, that the Jews, having a notion that  
the diseases, whose symptoms they could not account for, were  
inflicted by devils, whom God might employ to chastise man-  
kind, did therefore give the name of evil spirits to several di-  
stempers, which proceeded merely from natural causes; that,  
of these distempers, such as had any thing loathsome or nause-  
ous attending them, they generally called by the name of an *un-  
clean spirit*; and that, because sepulchres, of all other places,  
were reputed the most polluted; therefore whenever any crazy

thou Jesus of Nazareth? Art thou come to destroy us? † I know thee who thou art; the Holy One of God. But Jesus, who wanted the testimony of no such confessors, commanded his silence, and departure out of the poor man's body; which immediately was done, to the great surprise and amazement of all the spectators.

From  
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Ann Dom  
30, &c.  
from the  
beginning  
of the Go-  
spels to  
Matth. ix.  
8. Mark ii.  
17. Luke  
vi. 1.

or melancholic people took it in their heads to frequent such places they were always said to be possessed with such spirits; see *Beaufobre's Annot. in Matt. iv. 24. and x. 1.* But how groundless this whole hypothesis is, we shall take occasion to shew at large, in our answer to the objections belonging to this chapter.

† It may justly be made a question, whether the devil, who possessed this man, did actually know our Saviour to be the Son of God, as he pretended? There are two evangelists who relate this miracle, and, in the conclusion of it, both tell us, that our Saviour *suffered not the devils to speak, because they knew him to be Christ*, Mark i. 34. Luke iv. 41. But, notwithstanding this, some interpreters do not scruple to affirm the contrary, viz. that the devil had no perfect perception of our Lord's divinity, until his resurrection from the dead. The state of humiliation which he chose, the obscurity which he lived in, and the persecutions which he suffered, without ever employing his power to redress them; the care which he took to conceal his most renowned actions, and to refer the glory of them all to God alone, deceived the devil and kept him in suspense. For, had he known Jesus, say they, he would never have put it into the heart of Judas to betray, or of the Jews to crucify him, since this was the proper way to accomplish man's redemption. But the answer to this is obvious,—That though the devil did know Jesus to be the Messiah, yet he did not know the mystery of man's redemption. When he first essayed our Lord in his temptations, he spake indeed in a different manner, *If thou be the Son of God*; but, by his defeat he soon perceived that his antagonist was more than man. Though, therefore, he perfectly knew him to be the Son of God, yet seeing him invested with our nature, he might, very likely, be so far infatuated, as to think, that, by destroying his humanity, he might possibly defeat God's great design. For how sublime soever we may suppose his intellectual faculties to be, yet the wonderful work of man's salvation by the death of Christ, the apostle plainly tells us, is what no finite understanding could comprehend until *God was pleased to make all men see, what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, to the intent that now, unto principalities and powers in heavenly places, might be known, by the church, the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose, which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord*, Eph. iii. 9. &c. *Calmet's Commentary.*

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Ann. Dom  
30, &c.  
from the  
beginning  
of the Go-  
spels to  
Matt. ix. 8.  
Mark ii.  
23. Luke  
vi. 1.

Matt. vii.  
14.  
Mark i. 30.  
Luke iv. 40.  
Mark i. 35.  
Luke iv. 44.

From the synagogue our Lord retired to Peter's house, where his wife's mother lay sick of a fever; but, upon his approaching the bed-side, and taking her by the hand, he commanded the fever \* to depart, and that moment restored her to such perfect health, that immediately she arose, and (as if she had never been sick) waited on the company. This, and the other miracle in the synagogue, (as soon as the sun was set, and the Sabbath ended,) gathered all the city together about Peter's house, bringing demoniacs †, and diseased people of all kinds, and begging the relief of this heavenly physician, who very readily cured them all, by a touch only, or the imposition of his hand. The next morning he retired very early into a private place, that, being free from the noise and importunities of the multitude, he might have an opportunity to pray: but even in his solitude he was found out; and therefore, to disengage himself from such a crowd of attendants, he told his disciples, that the purport of his mission was to preach the gospel in other neighbouring cities; and therefore, leaving Capernaum, he made a progress into Galilee, preaching in their public synagogues, curing all kinds of distempers, and dispossessing all demoniacs that were brought to him.

Mark i. 40.  
Luke v. 12.  
In his pro-  
gress thro'  
Galilee, he  
cures a le-  
per, and at  
Capernaum  
a paralytic,  
&c.

In his progress through Galilee, he met with a man over-  
spread with a foul leprosy ‖, whom, upon his humble peti-  
tion,

\* Fevers are common distempers, and very often cured by ordinary means, so that the nature of this miracle did not lie in the cure of an incurable disease, but in the manner of the cure, which was with a touch; the suddenness of it; her fever immediately left her; and the perfectness of it, in that she was able to rise and wait on the company. This is said to be Peter's wife's mother; and from hence it may be presumed, that Peter, who was himself of Bethsaida, had married a woman of Capernaum, and there lived with his mother-in-law; *Pool's and Beausobre's Annotations.*

† This plainly shews, that the curing of diseases, and the casting out of devils, were two distinct things, and consequently the error of those, who, in their annotations upon the very texts where they are mentioned separately, endeavour to persuade us, that the devils cast out were only diseases; *Whitby's Annotations.*

‖ A leprosy was a distemper very common among the Jews. It proceeded from a general corruption of the blood and juices; rendered the person tainted with it extremely loathsome and deformed;



tion, with one touch † he immediately healed, but at the same time ‡ gave him strict charge not to discover it to any one, A. M. 4034. &c. Ann Dom 30, &c. deformed; and, in hot countries especially, was of all distempers the most spreading in the body, and the most contagious to others. But then, with regard to the notions of the Jews, and their law concerning it, it was still more detestable. It separated the person infected with it from all civil and religious communion. It distinguished him by all the outward significations of sorrow and shame. It was generally looked upon as a plague inflicted by God for some enormous crime. It was thought so far above the power of art, that the very attempt to cure it by medicine was esteemed an impious presumption. In short, it was dreaded as the highest of legal pollutions, and required a great variety of lustrations, before the patient could be restored to the privilege of a Jew, Levit. xiii. ; *Stanhope on the epistles and gospels, vol. 2.*

† But how came our Saviour to run the hazard of making himself unclean, Lev. v. 3. by touching one that was manifestly so? Now, whatever the law concerning the leper's uncleanness might be, it seems as if the priest that officiated about him was not affected by it, because we find him directed to make so near an examination and inspection into his distemper, Lev. xiii. 14, &c. Aaron, we may observe, though he officiated about his sister Miriam in her leprosy, is not said to have contracted any pollution by it; and therefore well might a much greater high priest than Aaron, in virtue of his office, claim the same immunity. But then, in virtue of his divinity, it was impossible for him to incur any legal uncleanness. As therefore the effect wrought upon this leper was a plain demonstration, that the finger of God was in it, and he consequently approved of the action; so the Jews make it a received rule, that a prophet might vary from, and even change, the ritual law: And from hence we may infer, that as Elijah and Elisha both might touch the dead children whom they raised to life again, without imputation of uncleanness, 1 Kings xvii. 19 and 2 Kings iv. 34. so might our Saviour touch this leper: though the opinion of some is, that he did not properly touch him as a leper, because the moment that he stretched out his hand, the leprosy was cured: but if it were not, the observation of Theophylact (in Luc. vii. 13.) still stands good *viz.* 'That our Lord might touch the leper, in order to shew that it was not necessary to observe those lesser matters of the law; that touching an unclean person did not defile one that was pure himself; and that the only thing indeed that did defile was the leprosy of the soul;' *Calmet's Commentary, and Whitby's Annotations.*

‡ If it be asked, Why our Saviour should so often command the concealing his miracles? we may assign for reasons, not only his

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one, until he † had presented himself before the priest and offered the sacrifice that was appointed for a testimony

modesty and great humility, that there might be no appearance of ostentation in him, and that the Jews might have no pretence to accuse him of seeking his own glory. Matt. xii. 16. but because at this time it was not proper to irritate the scribes and Pharisees (who had already made him quit Judea) too much. He knew that in such a determinate space, they would bring about what God in his counsel had decreed. In the mean time, he was to *work the works of him that sent him, while it was day*, John ix. 4. and to propagate his gospel, as much as possibly he could, both among the Jews and Gentiles, which could not have been so conveniently done if the greatness of his miracles had once provoked the malice and envy of his enemies to make their utmost opposition against him. He knew likewise the mad and capricious humour of the multitude, and had reason to apprehend, that they might *come and take him away by force, and make him a king*, John vi. 15. if all his miracles had been blazed abroad, before he had sufficiently instructed them in the spiritual nature of his kingdom. As therefore he was far from being a friend to popularity or sedition, he desired that several of his miracles might be suppressed, lest any bad consequences should attend the publication of them, until his own resurrection from the dead should be an undeniable proof and confirmation of all the rest. And this I take to be the reason of his referring the Pharisees, when they came to demand a sign of him, to that of the prophet Jonah, Matt. xii. 39 whereby he implied, that he would use no more means for their conviction, until, by the miracle of his resurrection, his divine power, and the completion of the ancient types and prophecies should be so dilucidly manifested, as to leave them without all excuse; *Calmet's Commentary; Beaufobre's and Hammond's Annotations.*

† The priesthood, at this time, was much degenerated from its primitive institution, and many human rites and ordinances were added to God's law concerning the priest's examination of the leper who pretended to be clean; and yet our Lord sent this leper to submit to all these new-invented ceremonies, as knowing that though they did indeed corrupt, yet they did not extinguish, the divine institution. The divine institution was no more than this,—That when a leper was cured he was to appear at the city gate, and the priest was to examine whether he was truly healed or no; that if he was, the priest received him into the city and by degrees into the temple, whither he should bring two clean birds of any kind, (the marginal note says sparrows,) and, having made a bunch of cedar and hyssop mixed

togeth-

mony † of his cure : But the poor man, out of the abundance of his joy, could not refrain from publishing it abroad where-ever he came, which still increased our Saviour's fame, so that he avoided returning openly into the city of Capernaum, lest the multitude of his followers should give some umbrage to the state ; and therefore, having finished his progress through Galilee, (which lasted for almost three months,) he retired into a desert place, and there employed some part of his time in prayer.

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4034. &c.  
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23. Luke  
vi. 1.

Upon leaving his retirement, he went privately into Capernaum, but it was not long before he was discovered ; and as soon as he was, such vast crouds were gathered together to hear his sermons, and to bring their diseased for cure, that the house where he was, and all the court-yard about it, were not sufficient to contain them. In the house were many great persons, Pharisees and doctors of the law from Jerusalem and Judea, as well as Galilee, who, led thither by their curiosity, sat hearing his discourses, and observing his miracles, when four men came bearing

Mat ix. 2.  
Mark ii. 3.  
Luke v. 18.

together, should tie them with a scarlet ribbon made of wool ; that to this bunch of cedar and hyssop one of these birds should be fastened alive, and the other killed by the leper that was cured, and its blood received in a vessel, filled with water ; that when this was done, the priest should take the bunch with the live bird, and having dipped both in the water tinged with the blood of the other bird, should seven times sprinkle the leper with it ; and that, after this, the live bird should be let loose to flee where it would, and the person thus healed and purified, should again be admitted to the society of the healthy, and a communion in religious offices, Lev. xiv. 1. &c. ; *Whitby's and Hammond's Annotations.*

† Various are the senses of the words, *a testimony to them* ; for, they may signify, that the gift or oblation, which the leper was to carry, would be a means to evince the perfection of his cure, when the priests had examined and admitted it as such ; that this would likewise be an evidence to the people, who stood at that time and saw him cured, when they should hear that the priests had pronounced him clean ; a proof to the priests, that himself was an observer of the law, by requiring his patient to comply with the ceremonies of it ; and a full demonstration, that he was a prophet come from God, since they themselves owned, that a leprosy could only be cured by the finger of God ; *Beausobre's, Hammond's, and Whitby's Annotations.*



A. M. a paralytic \* on his bed; but finding it impossible to pass  
 4034 &c. through the throng, they adventured to uncover the  
 Ann Dom house †, and to let down the sick man, bed and all, into  
 30, &c. the very room where he was sitting.  
 from the beginning of the Go-

\* The word comes from παραλύω, which signifies *to resolve* or *relax*, and seems to imply, that this distemper is a relaxation of the nerves, though it sometimes proceeds from other causes. It is always attended with great weaknesses, and obstructions of the blood and juices, which deprive the limbs of their motion, and sometimes occasion great pain. The distemper is reckoned above the power of all medicines to remove; and yet our Saviour cured it several times merely by a word's speaking; *Pool's Annotations.*

† But how could they possibly uncover the house, when they could not so much as get to it, much less get upon it, by reason of the throng that was before the door? Now, to have a right notion of this matter, we must observe, that the houses in Judea were, for the most part, even as they are to this day, (Sandys's travels, p. 36.) low built, and flat-roofed, and surrounded with a battlement about breast high, according to God's own injunction, Deut. xxii. 8; so that, to go up to the top of their houses, the Jews had two ways; one, by a pair of stairs within the house, leading up to the trap door, which lay even with the roof; and the other, on the outside of the house, by a ladder, or pair of stairs rather, either fixed or moveable, by which they could ascend to the roof when they pleased, without ever going into the house itself. Since this then was the general fashion of Jewish houses, we need not doubt, but that this at Capernaum was of the same figure and make; and therefore the bearers of the paralytic, finding that they could not come at the door by reason of the crowd, be-thought themselves of another expedient. They went round about a private way, and coming to the stairs, which stood on the outside of the house, up these they carry him, and presently gain the top. But, finding the trap door (or way of the roof, as the Jews call it) shut against them, immediately they go to work, and forcing it open, (which St Mark calls *uncovering* or *breaking up the roof*, chap. ii. 4. because the door, which lay even with the roof, when let down and shut, was reputed a part of it,) they conveyed him down that way, which St Luke calls *letting him down through the tiling*, i. e. through the roof, which (except where the door was) was all paved with large tiles, and by this means they found it no difficult matter to place him in the midst before Jesus; *Calmet's Commentary*; and *Pearce's Vindication of our Saviour's miracles.*

Our Blessed Saviour, being not a little pleased with such an instance \* of their faith, and reliance on his mercy, was resolved to cure the man; and accordingly, in the first place, he gave him an absolution † from his sins. This provoked the indignation of the scribes and Pharisees, as deeming him guilty of blasphemy ‡ because none (as they imagined)

A. M.  
4034. &c.  
Ann Dom.  
30, &c.  
from the  
beginning  
of the Go-  
pels to  
Matth. ix.  
8 Mark ii.  
23, Luke  
vi. 1.

\* Some have supposed, that, because the history makes no mention of any faith, but that of the friends and bearers of this impotent man, that therefore the patient himself had no part in that virtuous disposition, which inclined our Saviour to compassionate him; and thence they infer, how far a man may be benefited by the faith and intercessions of others in his behalf. But it is a mistake to think, that the words *their faith* exclude that of the sick person: For had he not been persuaded, that Christ was able to cure him, he would never have suffered himself to be presented to him, in a method so troublesome to his weak condition. We read indeed of no petition that he made to our Lord, but the violence of his distemper might possibly have deprived him of the use of speech; or, if it had not, the very spectacle of a body so debilitated, the manner of the action, and the fatigue which he must have undergone in it, all spake for him, and carried a more moving eloquence than it was possible for any tongue to utter; *Stanhope on the epistles and gospels, vol. 3.*

† The Jews were of this persuasion,—That every disease of the body (those especially which were of a grievous nature) were sent upon men for the punishment of their sins; and though they might carry this maxim too far, John ix. 3. yet sure it is, that the Scriptures represent most of the calamities of life as the natural effect of men's iniquities. And therefore some have observed, that as the word *sins* is frequently put for the punishment of sins, our Saviour's forgiving the man's sins was no more than a declaration of his intention to cure his distemper: Whereas it is plain, that our Saviour speaks of them as two distinct things, when he puts the question to the company, *Whether is it easier to say, thy sins be forgiven thee? or to say, Take up thy bed and walk?* Matth. ix. 5.; *Whitby's Annot.*

‡ This word, in Heathen writers, signifies no more than slander, or calumny, or opprobrious language of any kind, such as tends to impair a man's good name; but in the sacred style, it means unworthy and injurious talk concerning God's nature or attributes; as when we ascribe unto him such qualities as belong not to him, or rob him of those that do; to him, the infirmities of man; or to man, the perfections of God. This is the nature of the sin; and the punishment of it under the law, was *sioning without the gates of the city*, Lev. xxiv. 15, 16.; *Calmet's Commentary.*

A. M.  
4634, &c.  
A. 40 Dom  
30, &c.  
from the  
beginning  
of the Go-  
spels to  
Matth. ix.  
9. Mark ii.  
13. Luke  
vi. 1.

imagined) could forgive sins, but God alone. But, he knowing their secret thoughts, first reprov'd their censoriousness; and then, by curing the patient before them, plainly demonstrat'd what authority he had to forgive sins. For though the power of healing be much inferior to that of forgiving sins; yet, because it is not so easy to impose a cure upon the world, where men's senses are witnesses, as remission of sins, which is a secret and invisible operation; therefore all the people, who were convinced by their eyes of the efficacy of Christ's last words, *Rise and walk*, were satisfied of the truth of the former, *I by sins are forgiven thee*: And accordingly they glorified the Almighty, who had manifested such power on earth, and being filled with reverential fear, declared, that *they had seen strange and wonderful things that day*.

Matth ix. 9.  
Mark ii. 14.  
Luke v. 27.  
He calls  
Matthew  
the publi-  
can, and a-  
pologizes  
for his con-  
versing with  
sinners, and  
his disciples  
not fasting.

While our Lord continued at Capernaum, he went out one day (as frequently he did) to the lake-side, and finding one Matthew \*, otherwise named Levi, the son of Alphaeus, a rich publican, sitting in his office, he ask'd him to be one of his disciples, who immediately † for-  
look

\* Grotius, and those that follow him, are of opinion, that the Levi mentioned, Luke v. 27. is not the same with Matthew, in Matth. ix. 9. because Matthew never calls himself *Levi*, nor does Mark or Luke ever call *Levi Matthew*. But the answer to this has long since been given by St. Jerom, in Matth. ix. 9. viz. that the other two evangelists (as their charity and good nature became them) endeavour to cover the infamy of their brother's former way of life, and therefore never call him the *publican*, lest they should seem to reproach him with the remembrance of his former conversation, but speak of him under his other name; though he, out of his great humility, in the gospel written by himself, does not only take the more commonly known name of *Matthew*, but adds that odious title likewise of *Matthew the publican*. Since then the custom of having more names than one, is known to have prevailed among the Jews; and as St. Mark calls him *Levi*, the son of Alphaeus; so Matthew, in all church-history, is said to be the son of one of the same name; and since the history of the person, called *Levi* in Mark and Luke, agrees so exactly with what is said of him, who, in the other evangelist, is called *Matthew*, that there is not one circumstantial difference to be perceived, we cannot but conclude that this Matthew and Levi were one and the same person; *Whitby's Annotations*, and *Stanhope on the epistles and gospels*, vol. 4.

† The old enemies of our religion, Julian and Porphyry, ac-  
cused



fook his gainful employment, and afterwards became both an apostle and evangelist. Within a few days after his conversion, Matthew invited our Saviour and his disciples, and, among others, some of the profession which he had forsook, to a feast. The scribes and Pharisees, (who accounted all in a manner sinners, besides themselves, but more especially these \* publicans) began to expostulate with these disciples, how it came to pass that their master, who set himself up for a preacher of righteousness, and a reformer of others, came to be so intimate with these lewd and lost wretches, as to sit and eat with them at the same table: But, when our Saviour undertook the argument, he gave so fair an account of the reasons for his conversing with these people, as made the very objection

A. M.  
4034, &c.  
Ann Dom  
30, &c.  
from the  
beginning  
of the Go-  
spels to  
Matt. ix. 8.  
Mark ii. 23.  
Luke vi. 1.

cused Matthew of folly and inconsiderateness, in following a man whom he knew nothing of. But St Jerom's reply is,—That he could not want a sufficient knowledge both of our Saviour's doctrines and miracles before his call. The publicans, we find, were great frequenters of the synagogues, and other places where our Saviour taught, and, of all others, expressed the greatest eagerness to be instructed by him; and therefore, if Matthew was of the same disposition, he could not want opportunities of being acquainted with our Saviour's preaching, and of the wonderful works which he did every where, but more especially at Capernaum. It is very probable, therefore, that Matthew, upon such conviction, was inclinable to become one of our Saviour's disciples, even before he asked him: But if he was not, the lustre and majesty of the divinity hid under the manhood, but shining conspicuously in the face of Jesus Christ, was enough to attract every one that he cast his eyes upon; at least, that powerful impulse which he, to whom all hearts are open, knew how to inject into Matthew's breast, could not fail to do it: And from this supernatural movement doubtless it chiefly was, that so readily, and without the least hesitation, he left all, and followed Christ; *Calmet's Commentary*.

\* Nor was it only among the Jews, but among the Heathens likewise, that the name of a *publican* was infamous. For, according to their writers, they were accounted no better than thieves and cheats: Free violence, and unpunished rapine, and shameless covetousness, were their public profession. *πᾶσις τελευτᾶν πᾶσις ἐστὶν ἀπραξία*, was the saying of the poet; and it is said of Theocritus, that being asked, Which was the cruelest among the beasts? His reply was, 'That, of those in the mountains, the bear and the lion; but of those in the city, the publicans and sycophants;' *Whitby's and Hammond's Annotations*.

A. M. 434, &c. Dom 36, &c. from the beginning of the Gospel to

jection \* become his apology. But all this would not content the Pharisees; and therefore, joining with some of John's disciples, that were then present, they came and demanded of him, why it was that his disciples observed no fasts. when † they, and John's disciples, were known,

to

Mat. ix. 8. \* The arguments which our Saviour uses to the Pharisees for his keeping company with publicans and sinners, are these three: 1st, *They that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick*, Matth. ix. 12.; by which he intimates to them, that, in conversing with such sort of persons, he was about the discharge of his proper business; and that as a physician's profession did sometimes call him among patients that had the most virulent distempers; to he, whose office it was to heal souls, ought not to refuse his assistance to those whose circumstances most of all wanted his help and advice. 2d, God's saying, in the prophet Hosea. chap. vi. 6 *that he would have mercy*, meaning thereby all the kind offices whereby we promote our neighbour's advantage, *rather than sacrifice*. i. e. the rites and ordinances of the ceremonial law; whereby he taught them, that though these latter might, in their due place and season, be acceptable to God, yet charity to the souls of men (which was the highest act of mercy, and that wherein he was then employing himself) was much more esteemed by him. 3d, *That he came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance*; or that the great design of his appearance in the world was, to change the corrupt manners and dispositions of men; a change, which the righteous standing less in need of, should no more grudge the opportunities of it to sinners, than the healthful ought to think themselves disparaged, when the physician forbears the visits to them which he makes to the sick. Some commentators however have observed in this last argument a severe irony, and thus they expound it; 'I am not come to cure those that think themselves well, nor to save those that account themselves righteous, as you Pharisees seem to do; but I am come to cure those who find themselves sick, and are sensible of the burden of their manifold iniquities, as these publicans seem to be; Stanhope on the epistles and gospels, vol. 4; and Calmet's Commentary.

† Besides the public fasts appointed by the church, the Pharisees in general did fast two days every week, and those of more strictness than ordinary, four. The disciples of John too, who was himself a man of such abstinence, that our Saviour says of him, *He came* (comparatively) *neither eating or drinking*, Matth. xi. 18 did, no doubt, in a great measure, follow the example of their master; and, now that he was confined in prison, might, very probably, double their fasts and their prayers to God for his deliverance. And if they and

the

to keep many? To which he replied, 'That it was not  
 ' the proper season for the \* friends of the bridegroom to  
 ' fast and afflict themselves, while they had the bride-  
 ' groom's company, but when they were deprived of it ;  
 ' and that it would be as imprudent and preposterous a  
 ' thing, to impose rigorous austerities upon his disciples,  
 ' (who were but novices in religion, and inured to ano-  
 ' ther way of life,) as it would be to sew a piece of new  
 ' cloth upon a rotten garment, which, upon any stress,  
 ' would make the rent worse ; or to put new wine † into  
 ' old

A. M.  
 3034 &c.  
 Ann Dom  
 '30, &c.  
 from the  
 beginning  
 of the Go-  
 spels to  
 M<sup>st</sup>. ix 8.  
 Mark 1. 23.  
 Luke vi. 1.

Pharisees were able to do this, why should the disciples of  
 Christ be deemed insufficient? Now, to this it may be an-  
 swered, that among the Jews there were not only the sects of  
 the Essenes and Pharisees, who led an austere life, but also  
 schools of the prophets, many of whom were Nazarites, and  
 consecrated to the service of God : and that, besides these, the  
 Jews had likewise academical and private schools, from whence  
 might come disciples to John, and the Pharisees, already train-  
 ed up to fasting and penance, and other severe duties of reli-  
 gion. But now it is certain, that the disciples of our Lord  
 were chosen from their fishing trade, and so came to him whol-  
 ly unacquainted with, and unfitted for these austerities, which  
 to impose upon them now was not necessary, because his con-  
 tinuance among them was not to be long, and after his depar-  
 ture they would have occasion more than enough, to exercise  
 these, and many more painful duties, in the propagation of  
 the gospel, and the persecutions which should attend it; *Whit-  
 by's Annotations.*

\* The Baptist, in his discourse to his disciples, had compar-  
 ed our Saviour to a bridegroom, and himself to his friend, or  
 chief guest. John iii. 29. ; and therefore, as our Saviour de-  
 signedly makes use of the same allusion, his argument runs  
 thus,—' I am the bridegroom, and my church is my bride ;  
 ' as long as I am here, lasts the marriage-feast, and my disci-  
 ' ples are the children or friends of the bridegroom, and so are  
 ' not to mourn, but to rejoice with me while this time lasts :  
 ' But, at my death and departure, this bridegroom shall be  
 ' taken from them, and then it will be time for them to fast  
 ' and mourn ; *Whitby's Annotations.*

† The bottles which were in use in the east, and at this time  
 are very common in other countries, were not made of glass,  
 as ours are, but were certain bags made of goats skins, being  
 well pitched and sewed together. They are very good vessels  
 to preserve wine, oil, or any other liquor in ; and in this re-  
 spect, more especially, very convenient to carry from place to  
 place, because, fall they never so often, they will not break,  
 unless they be very old or decayed. In which sense our Savi-



A. M.  
4034, &c.  
Ann Dom  
30. &c  
from the  
beginning  
of the Go-  
spels to  
Math. ix.  
8, Mark ii.  
23. Luke  
vi. 1.

old leathern bottles; which, upon the least fermenta-  
tion, would both burst the bottles, and destroy the li-  
quor; for see the prevalence of custom, and how diffi-  
cult it is to change an inveterate habit, for as much as  
none having drank old wine desireth new; for he saith the old  
is better.

### THE OBJECTION.

MEN that take matters upon content, and read his-  
tories without ever examining into them, may  
perhaps imagine, that the evangelists have given us a  
fair and rational account of our Saviour's doctrine and  
miracles, without incurring any of the absurdities or in-  
consistencies that are so manifest in other writers; but,  
if we take a nearer inspection of the books that have de-  
scended to us under their names, we shall find them re-  
lating such incredible stories, so frequently mistaken in  
matters of fact, so generally misapplying passages in the  
prophets, so inconsistent with themselves, and so con-  
tradictory to one another, that some of the objections  
which Jewish or Heathen infidels have advanced against  
them, have not been thought groundless or insignificant.

For what a lamentable thing is it, that the two e-  
vangelists, Matthew <sup>o</sup> and Luke <sup>p</sup>, in deducing our  
Saviour's lineage, should, almost in every article dis-  
agree, and thwart one another; or (were it possible to  
reconcile them) that they should both make their pedi-  
grees terminate in Joseph, who was no more than the re-  
puted father of Jesus, and not in Jesus himself, as born  
of the Virgin Mary, from whom alone he had his hu-  
man nature, and whose genealogy, in this case, was only  
to be regarded? What a plain contradiction is it, that  
St Matthew <sup>q</sup> should introduce our Lord as affirm-  
ing to his disciples, that Elias was already come in the  
person of John the Baptist; and St John <sup>r</sup> put it  
in

our compares his disciples, before the descent of the Ho-  
ly Spirit upon them, to old bottles because they were not  
capable either of comprehending or practising all that per-  
fection which he came into the world to teach mankind; *Cal-*  
*met's Commentary.*

<sup>a</sup> Luke v. 39.      <sup>o</sup> Chap. i. 1.      <sup>p</sup> Chap. iii.      <sup>q</sup> Chap.  
xvii. 11, 12.      <sup>r</sup> Chap. i. 21.

‘ in the mouth of the Baptist to assert the very contrary,  
 ‘ which he certainly would not have done, had he been the  
 ‘ person predicted by the <sup>3</sup> prophet ? And what a sad mis-  
 ‘ take in point of chronology, that St Luke should make  
 ‘ the taxation appointed by Augustus, which happened  
 ‘ before our Saviour’s birth, fall out when Cyrenius was  
 ‘ governor of Syria, though (according to the account of all  
 ‘ other historians) he did not succeed Quintilius Varus in  
 ‘ that government, ‘ till above twelve years after.

A. M.  
 4034. &c.  
 Ann Dom  
 30, &c.  
 from the  
 beginning  
 of the Go-  
 spels to  
 Mat b. ix.  
 8 Mark ii.  
 23. Luke  
 vi 1.

‘ Isaiah makes mention indeed of a virgin’s <sup>u</sup> conceiv-  
 ‘ ing, and bearing a son, which St Matthew <sup>x</sup> has ap-  
 ‘ plied to the conception and birth of our Blessed Savi-  
 ‘ our ; but as the word *Alma*, used by the prophet, does  
 ‘ not necessarily denote a *virgin*, but sometimes a *young*  
 ‘ *woman* that has had knowledge of man ; there is reason  
 ‘ to believe, that it should bear this signification, when  
 ‘ referred to the mother of Jesus, because it is difficult to  
 ‘ imagine, how a woman should conceive, and bear a son,  
 ‘ and still preserve her virginity. And indeed, if this be  
 ‘ not the proper acceptation of the word, we can hardly  
 ‘ assign any reason, why our Saviour should make choice  
 ‘ of a woman to be his mother, who was betrothed and  
 ‘ married to a man, rather than a pure virgin, who had  
 ‘ no such engagements upon her.

‘ Whoever looks into the writings of the prophets,  
 ‘ must observe, that all along, down from the time of  
 ‘ David, the Messiah is foretold under the character of a  
 ‘ very powerful prince, who was to reign over the house  
 ‘ of Jacob for ever ; and therefore, it is absurd to put  
 ‘ the son of Mary (who was born meanly, lived poorly,  
 ‘ and died ignominiously) upon the world for that person,  
 ‘ who is represented as one of the most glorious kings that  
 ‘ ever was, or ever shall be, in the universe. It is ab-  
 ‘ surd to tell us, that the fulness of the Godhead dwelt  
 ‘ in him bodily, and yet to relate the story <sup>y</sup> of the dé-  
 ‘ scent of the Holy Spirit upon him ; unless we can sup-  
 ‘ pose, that this accession of the third person in the Tri-  
 ‘ nity could enable him to do more than the Divinity,  
 ‘ which always resided in him : But much more ab-  
 ‘ surd is it, upon the like supposition, to talk of <sup>z</sup> his  
 ‘ being

<sup>s</sup> Mal. iv. 5. 6.      <sup>t</sup> Joseph. Antiq. lib. 18. c. 1. ; and  
 Prideaux’s Connexion, part 2. lib. 9.      <sup>u</sup> Chap viii. 14.  
<sup>x</sup> Chap. i. 22, 23.      <sup>y</sup> Matth iii, 16.      <sup>z</sup> Chap.

A. M. 4074, &c. Ann Dom 30. &c. from the beginning of the Gospels to Matth. ix. 8. Mark ii. 23. Luke vi. 1.

‘ being tempted by the devil; when the devil, if he knew him, would not have dared to do it; and, if he did not, the Divinity wherewith he was armed, must have made him impregnable to all his assaults; so that the only end of this transaction must have been to shew, that God was able to sustain and overcome the temptations of the devil.

‘ Miracles are generally supposed to be the manifestation of this Divinity residing in our Saviour, and the curing of demoniacs is always accounted one of the greatest of this kind; but, as it is difficult to assign any reason, why dæmons at this time were more numerous in Judea, than in any country we ever read of, we have reason to think, that the persons represented in the New Testament as demoniacs, were only such as were afflicted with strange diseases, fits of the mother, convulsions, falling sickness, and the like; which the sacred penmen (according to the idiom of the Hebrew language) express in this awful manner.

‘ The first miracle that our Saviour did, was his turning water into wine at a marriage feast; but how he, who is all along represented as a very grave and sedate person, should vouchsafe his presence at a wedding, which is usually a scene of levities and excess; how he came to give his mother so rough and undutiful an answer, that interpreters have been at some trouble to put a tolerable construction upon it; and above all, how he came to supply the company, which had already drank enough, with such a large quantity of wine, as almost denotes him an encourager of intemperance, are points that the evangelists have left to the perverse conjectures of unbelievers.

‘ The completion of prophecies, in the person and actions of our Blessed Lord, is certainly a strong evidence of his being the Messiah; but, in the application which the evangelists make of several of these, their scope is commonly so perverted, their words so corrupted, and their sense so wrested from its plain and obvious meaning; such shreds and loose sentences are culled out for this purpose, as have no manner of relation to the Messiah, but such as have received their completion in some other person, many ages before; and upon every pinch, such figurative and mystical interpretations



‘ interpretations (as quite expound away the true importance  
 ‘ of the prophecies) are fled to for shelter, that all that the  
 ‘ gospel-writers seem to have done upon this head, is only  
 ‘ to impose upon the world, by a parcel of citations, and  
 ‘ applications of prophecies, which, upon examination, will  
 ‘ be found nothing to the purpose.

A. M.  
 4034, &c.  
 Ann Dom  
 30, &c.  
 from the  
 beginning  
 of the Go-  
 fels to

‘ <sup>b</sup> St Matthew, for instance, (to name one evangelist  
 ‘ for all,) having given an account of the conception of  
 ‘ the Virgin Mary, and the birth of Jesus, informs us <sup>c</sup>,  
 ‘ That all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was  
 ‘ spoken by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with  
 ‘ child, and shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name  
 ‘ Immanuel! But the words, as they stand in Isaiah <sup>d</sup>,  
 ‘ relate to a young woman in the days of Ahaz, as appears  
 ‘ by their context, and cannot, in any tolerable construc-  
 ‘ tion, have relation to the birth of our Saviour, whose  
 ‘ name was not Immanuel, but Jesus.

Math. x.  
 9 Mark ii.  
 23. Luke  
 i. 1.

‘ The same evangelist informs us, that Jesus was carried  
 ‘ into Egypt, from whence he returned after the death of  
 ‘ Herod <sup>e</sup>, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the  
 ‘ Lord by the prophet, Out of Egypt have I called my son;  
 ‘ which words are no where to be found but in the pro-  
 ‘ phet Hosea <sup>f</sup>; and yet, <sup>g</sup> according to their plain and ob-  
 ‘ vious sense, they are no prophecy, but relate to a past  
 ‘ action, viz. the conducting the children of Israel out of  
 ‘ the land of Egypt.

‘ Again, the same evangelist, <sup>h</sup> having given us the ac-  
 ‘ count of the slaughter of the children in Bethlehem,  
 ‘ and in the coasts thereof, immediately subjoins, that  
 ‘ then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremiah <sup>i</sup> the  
 ‘ prophet, saying, In Rama was there a voice heard, la-  
 ‘ mentation, and weeping, and great mourning; Rachel weep-  
 ‘ ing for her children, and would not be comforted, because  
 ‘ they are not; whereas it is plain from the context, that  
 ‘ this lamentation, in its primary sense, does not relate  
 ‘ to the massacre of the children in Bethlehem, but to the  
 ‘ ten tribes being carried away into captivity, and can-  
 ‘ not

<sup>b</sup> Collins's Grounds and reasons.

<sup>c</sup> Matth. i. 22, 23.

<sup>d</sup> Chap. vii. 14

<sup>e</sup> Matth. ii. 15,

<sup>f</sup> Chap. xi. 1.

<sup>g</sup> Collins's Grounds and reasons.

<sup>h</sup> Matth. ii. 17.

<sup>i</sup> Chap. xxxi. 15.

A. M. 4034. &c. A. n. Dom 30, &c. from the beginning of the Gospel to Matth ix. 2. Mark ii. 23. Luke vi. 1.

‘not, without manifest violence, be applied to the other.

‘Once more, the same evangelist, having given us a short account of the return and settlement of our Lord’s parents in the city of Nazareth, acquaints us farther, that the reason of their doing so was, <sup>k</sup> that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, *He shall be called a Nazarene*, which is directly forging a quotation upon us, because there is no one of the prophets that ever said or wrote any such thing. They no where tell us, that the Messiah was to dwell at Nazareth; nor can his dwelling at Nazareth (supposing they did) be any ground for his being called a Nazarene.

‘The place foretold by the prophet for his birth and habitation, was Bethlehem, and thither the wise men were directed to repair; but now what sort of persons these wise men were, and from what part of the world they came, what kind of star that was which conducted them, and how they could know that it portended the birth of the king of the Jews; how the justice and mercy of God can be affolizied, in suffering so many harmless babes to be massacred at Bethlehem upon the account of Christ, or how Christ’s conduct may be accounted for, in discovering himself so freely to the Samaritan woman, when he had all along given such strict charge to his apostles to conceal what they knew of his being the Messiah and Son of God; these, and some other points in this period, the evangelists have given us no manner of satisfaction in, and have therefore left us at large, either to form conjectures of our own, or to call in question the truth of their narrations’

Answered by shewing that there is no contradiction in our Lord’s genealogy.

That the evangelists were persons of too much probity to deal in lies, and cunningly devised fables, is evident from their writings; wherein we find, not only the strictest prohibitions against guile and dissimulation, both in words and deeds, but such evident tokens of their simplicity and godly sincerity, as show that they would not be prevailed upon to conceal truth, even though it might tend to their lasting dishonour. For let any one tell me, how they can be supposed capable of forging any thing for the advancement of their

<sup>k</sup> Matth. ii. 23.

their cause, <sup>1</sup> who have not been wanting to record the obscurity of their master's birth and life, the poverty and reproaches he endured in his ministry, the ignominy of his passion and death, and the terrors and agonies of his mind upon the approach of them; nay, who have not dissembled their own faults and failings, their mean extraction and employments, their ignorance and mistakes, their cowardly desertion of their Lord, and many unsuccessful attempts to convert others by their preaching? Men that were thus frank and open in their proceedings, could never designedly palm any falsehoods upon the world; and if they were mistaken in some passages, it must be esteemed their misfortune, not their crime.

They were indeed illiterate men all, except St Luke, and brought up in mean employments; so very mean, that we cannot suppose them capable of writing a regular history of any kind, had they not been directed in it by the Spirit of Truth; but then to frame such an excellent system of morality as is contained in the gospels; to give such an extraordinary account of the satisfaction for sin, and of the nature and office of a mediator; to feign the life and actions of a Messiah, which should agree so exactly with the predictions of the prophets, and the types and prefigurations of the Mosaic law; this they were no more able to do, without the assistance of the same Divine Spirit, then they were to create a world: And yet, notwithstanding the great variety and difficulty of this province, it is wonderful to observe how all the four evangelists, who wrote at different times, and in distant places, agree, not only in the main topics, but sometimes in the most minute circumstances, <sup>m</sup> insomuch that whenever they seem to disagree, (which chiefly arises from their not confining themselves to the same words, or the same order of time,) it looks as if the Spirit of God designed on purpose that it should be so, not only that they might be distinct witnesses of the same things, but that all succeeding ages of the Christian world might see with their eyes, that they had neither transcribed from one another, nor combined together like crafty knaves.

The

<sup>1</sup> Stanhope's Sermons at Boyle's lectures.  
Cosmolog. sac. pag. 304.

<sup>m</sup> Grew's

A. M.  
4034. &c.  
Ann Dom  
30, &c.  
from the  
beginning  
of the Go-  
pels to  
Mark. ix.  
8. Mark ii.  
23. Luke  
vi. 1.



A. M.  
4034. &c.  
Ann. Dom  
30, &c.  
from the  
beginning  
of the Go  
spels to  
Matt ix. 8  
Mark ii.  
23. Luke  
vi. 1.

<sup>a</sup> The truth is, though the evangelists no where contradict themselves, or one another, yet they were not so sollicitous to prevent their being suspected of doing so by injudicious and rash men, as they would have been had they recorded any thing but truth; because it is suitable to the simplicity of truth, not to be over nice and curious about every punctilio, and smaller circumstance, (as the manner of falsehood is,) but to speak fully and intelligibly, and then leave it to men whether they will believe or not. Instead of criticising, therefore, upon some difficult parts of the evangelical writers, we ought to consider their whole design, method, and contrivance; and if in these we find them rational and uniform, the common candour of mankind will hinder us from thinking them capable of any gross mistakes or inconsistencies, and where we perceive the appearance of any such, put us upon the charitable office of adjusting and reconciling them.

There is indeed a great and uncommon difference between St Matthew and St Luke, in their genealogies of our Saviour; but to accommodate this, we may observe, 1<sup>st</sup> That these two evangelists were men of different nations, and in that respect had different designs. For <sup>o</sup> St Matthew was by birth a Jew, wrote his gospel for the benefit of the Jewish converts; and wrote it, very probably, in their language: And as he adhered to the received custom of the Jews in this matter of genealogy, he began his deduction no higher than Abraham, the father of the Hebrews; but St Luke was a Gentile, and may truly be called the evangelist, as St Paul was the apostle, of the Gentiles; and therefore when he comes to relate the pedigree of Jesus, he takes a different method, and carries it up as far as Adam, the father of all mankind.

2<sup>d</sup>, We may observe likewise that St Matthew <sup>p</sup> intends only to set down our Lord's <sup>†</sup> political or royal pedigree;

<sup>a</sup> Jenkin's Reasonableness of the Christian religion, vol. 2. c. 8. <sup>o</sup> Bishop Kidder's Demonstration of the Messiah, part 2. c. 14. <sup>p</sup> South's Sermons, vol. 3.

<sup>†</sup> That St Matthew uses the word *begat* only in a political sense, is clear from hence.—That he applies it to him who had no child, even to Jeconiah, of whom is expressly said, Jer. xxiii. 30. That God wrote him childless; whereupon, being deposed by the king of Babylon, Zedekiah his uncle,

was

pedigree, by which he had a right to the crown of the Jews, but St Luke shews his natural descent through the several successions of those from whom he took flesh and blood: And, to this purpose, we find St Matthew (as we said just now) beginning his reckoning only from Abraham, <sup>4</sup> to whom the first promise of the kingdom was made; whereas St Luke runs his line up to Adam, the first head and fountain of human nature; which plainly shews, that the one deduced only his title to the crown, and the other the natural descent of his humanity.

A. M.  
4031, &c.  
Ann Dom  
30. &c.  
from the  
beginning  
of the Go-  
spels to  
Matth ix.  
8. Mark ii.  
13. Luke  
vi. 1.

3d, We may observe farther, that as David had several sons by former wives, so by Bathsheba likewise he had three besides Solomon, whereof the eldest, next to him, was Nathan, and that Christ descended naturally from David, not by Solomon, but by Nathan: For, though it be frequently said in Scripture, that the Messiah should spring from David, it is never said that he should descend from Solomon; for which reason St. Luke only deduces Nathan's line, which came into the possession of the throne (upon Jeconiah's captivity, and want of issue) in the person of Salathiel.

4th, We may observe again, that the crown of Judah, being now come into the line of Nathan in the person of Salathiel, and after him, in the great and renowned Zorobabel, forasmuch as the two evangelists agree from Jeconiah to Zorobabel, and after him divide, (each ascribing to him a different successor, *viz.* the former Abiud, and the latter Rhesa,) we may rationally suppose, that these two were the sons of Zorobabel, and that from Abiud, the elder brother, lineally descended Joseph, according to the computation of St Matthew, and from Rhesa, the younger brother, descended Mary, of whom Jesus was born, according to the description of St Luke.

5th, Once more we may observe, that it was a custom of the Jews, not to reckon the woman by name in her pedigree,

was made king, and afterwards upon the removal of him likewise, (there remaining no more of the line of Solomon,) Salathiel, being next of kin, was declared king of the Jews; which Salathiel, upon that account, is said by Matth. chap. i. 12. to have been begotten by Jeconiah, not because he was naturally his son, but only legally or politically so, as succeeding in the kingdom during Jeconiah's captivity; *South's Sermons, vol 3.*

<sup>4</sup> Gen. xviii 8.

A. M.  
4034, &c.  
Ann Dom  
30, &c.  
from the  
beginning  
of the Go  
spels to  
Matth ix  
8 Mark ii  
23, Luke  
v. 1

gree, but to reckon the husband in right of his wife, for which reason, we are not to think it strange, that we find Joseph twice reckoned, first in his own right, by St. Matthew, and then in his wife Mary's right by St. Luke; for it is certain, that Mary was properly the daughter of Eli, and that Joseph, who, in the account succeeds him, is so reckoned, not as his natural son, but as his son-in-law, instead of his wife Mary, as the manner of the Jews was: And accordingly it is remarked by some learned men, that St. Luke<sup>r</sup> does not say of Joseph, that he was the son of Eli, but only *του 'Ηλ* he *was of Eli*, i. e. related to him, and belonging to his family, as his son-in-law. Fit however it was, that the genealogy of Jesus should be deduced from Joseph, because it was so generally received by the Jews, that Jesus<sup>s</sup> was the son of the carpenter, <sup>t</sup> the son of Joseph; so that if Joseph had not been acknowledged to have been of the tribe of Judah, and of the family of David, <sup>u</sup> since, according to the received rule of the Jews, 'the family of the mother is not called a family,' they would not have failed to have objected this as a just prejudice against all our Lord's pretences of being the Messiah.

The sum of these observations, in short, is this——

\* That the royal line of David by Solomon being extinct in Jeconiah, the crown and kingdom passed into the next younger line of Nathan (another son of David) in Salathiel and Zorobabel, which Zorobabel having two sons, Abiud and Rhesa, the royal dignity descended of right upon the line of Abiud, of which Joseph was the last; and he marrying the Virgin Mary, who sprung from the line of Rhesa, the younger son of Zorobabel, and (as some imagine) having no issue himself, his right passed into the line of Mary, being next of kin, and, by that means, upon Jesus her son; so that he was both naturally the son of David, and also legally the king of the Jews, the latter of which is accounted to us by St. Matthew, as the former is by St. Luke.

This seems to be a pretty clear deduction of our Saviour's pedigree, and is capable of giving a fair solution to a great many of those objections, which arise from the different names, or the unequal numbers in the names,  
or

<sup>r</sup> Chap. iii. 24.

<sup>s</sup> Matth. xiii. 55.

<sup>t</sup> John vi. 42.

<sup>u</sup> Whitby's Annotations.

<sup>x</sup> South's Sermons.



or the unequal distances from each other, which are discernible in the two genealogies. But perhaps interpreters might save themselves the trouble of giving a reason for several difficulties occurring therein, by saying that St Matthew <sup>7</sup> (concerning whom the main dispute is) recites his account as he found it in the authentic copies of the Jews, who doubtless in every family had preserved some known and approved genealogy of their descent from Abraham, the father of their nation, in whom they so much gloried, and from whose loins they expected the promised Messiah.

A. M.  
4034, &c.  
Ann Dom  
30, &c.  
from the  
beginning  
of the G-  
ospels to  
Matth. 1.  
8<sup>th</sup> Martii.  
23, Luke  
vi 1.

That even in our Saviour's time, the Jews <sup>2</sup> had genealogical tables, wherein they kept an account of their families and tribes, is evident from what Josephus says, viz. <sup>2</sup> That he gave the succession of his family, as he found it written in the public books; nor need we question but that the like, or greater, care was employed to preserve the stems of the royal family of David. Since then the Jews, who lived in the time when the gospels were published, (though exactly curious in things of this nature, and withal maliciously bent against Christ and Christianity,) never once endeavoured to invalidate the account which these evangelists give us; this seems to be a sufficient proof, that these genealogies, when first they came abroad, were neither thought erroneous, nor inconsistent, but agreeable to the public records then in use; and if any difficulties now arise in them, they are not to be attributed to any real and intrinsic cause, but accidentally to the ignorance of interpreters, for want of proper helps, at this distance of time, whereby to explain them.

It may seem a little incongruous perhaps, that the Baptist should deny what our Saviour confirms concerning him, viz. that he was the Elias who was to be sent before, to make preparations for his coming; but in this there will be no manner of contradiction, if it does but appear that the affirmation of the one, and the negation of the other, proceed upon different considerations. Now the state of the matter is this,——The Jews at this time were in full expectation of the Messiah; but then it was an universal belief among them, that Elias should

In our  
1. d's af-  
firming  
John to be  
Ehat.

U u 2

appear

<sup>7</sup> Bishop Kidder's Demonstration, part 2. c. 14. <sup>2</sup> White's Annotations on Matth. i. 2. <sup>2</sup> Chap. iv. 5.

A. M.  
4034, &c.  
Ann Dom  
30, &c.  
from the  
beginning  
of the Go-  
spels to  
Math ix.  
8. Mark ii.  
23, Luke  
vi. 1.

appear before him, and that this appearance should be a certain token of his coming: This belief they founded upon the prophecy of Malachi, *Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet, before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord*; but then they imagined, either that the body of Elijah was preserved in paradise, and should again appear upon earth at this season appointed for it, or that his body being dissolved, God would infuse the spirit of Elijah into a new one, created for that purpose. When therefore the great council of Jerusalem sent to enquire of the Baptist, Whether he was either the Christ or Elias, now returned from heaven, (as they imagined he was to do upon Christ's appearance,) to this their sense of the question he replies, in express terms, that he was neither the one nor the other. But this does not at all interfere with our Lord's affirming, that he was the person foretold under the name and character of Elias, in the true signification of Malachi's prophecy. He was not indeed the very Elias, who had lived in king Ahab's time, of whose second coming into the world the Sanhedrim now enquired, according to their misconstruction of that prophecy; but, according to the true construction thereof, he was the person who came in the spirit and power of Elias, of whom Elias was a type, and whose temper and manner of life Elias much resembled.

How usual a thing it is for persons, who resemble others in qualities, offices, or actions, to be described by the names \* of those whom they resemble, no one can be ignorant, who is the least acquainted either with the phrase of Scripture, or with the common forms of speech. Thus the Messias is promised by the name of *David*,<sup>b</sup> because he was to be a king; Zadock the high priest, and his sons, are recorded by the name of *Aaron*, and his sons, by reason of their office; and, among us, it is no uncommon thing to call the rich man, *a Cræsus*; the wise man, *a Solomon*; the warrior, *a Cæsar*, *an Alexander*, or the

\* Thus the poet calls *Turnus* another *Achilles*:

— Alius Latio jam partus Achilles,  
Natus et ipse dea —

And elsewhere he uses the same liberty of speech:  
Altera erit Typhis, et altera, quæ vebat Argo,  
Delectos heroas; erunt etiam altera bella,  
Atque iterum in Trojam magnus mittetur Achilles.

Virgil, *Æn.* 6. et *eclog.* 4.

<sup>b</sup> Ezek. xxxiv. 23, 24.

the like; and where then, I pray, can be the misapplication, in our Saviour's calling the Baptist by the name of *Elias*, when, in the severity of his life, his zeal for God's glory, his suffering persecution, his bold rebuking of vice, his reproofs of Herod, and the hatred of his incestuous queen, answerable to the prophet's chidings of Ahab, and the malice of Jezebel, he so nearly resembled the Tishbite? <sup>c</sup> He was not indeed the real Tishbite; but, by the answer which he returns to these delegates from the Sanhedrim, <sup>d</sup> *I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, make straight the way of the Lord, &c.* he plainly intimates, that he was the very messenger promised in Malachi, and came to discharge the office assigned to him in that prophet. So far is John's answer from contradicting what our Lord asserts of him, that it is indeed a confirmation of it.

A. M.  
4034, &c.  
Ann Dom  
30, &c.  
from the  
beginning  
of the Go-  
spels to  
Matt. ix. 8.  
Mark ii. 23.  
Luke vi. 1.

The better to understand the nature of that taxation, which St Luke <sup>e</sup> refers us to, we must observe, that every fifth year, it was a customary thing to take an account of the citizens of Rome, for which purpose there were proper officers appointed, who were called *censors*; <sup>f</sup> that their business was to make a registration of all the Roman citizens, their wives and children, with the age, qualities, trades, offices, and estates, both real and personal of them all; that Augustus Cæsar was the first that extended this to the provinces, and three times in his reign, first in the twenty-eighth year before the Christian æra; secondly, in the eighth year before it; and, thirdly, in the fourteenth year after it, caused the like description to be made of all the provinces belonging to the Roman empire, and that this second enrolment, which was in the eighth year of the vulgar Christian æra, *i. e.* three years before that in which Christ was born, was the description to which St Luke refers us.

In the ac-  
count of  
the taxati-  
on by St.  
Matthew.

Now, supposing the execution of Cæsar's decree, in every province of the Roman empire, to be committed to the governor of it; the carrying this work through all the countries that made up the province of Syria, *viz.* through Syria, Cælo-Syria, Phœnicia, and Judea, could not well take up less than the space of three years; for if

Joab

<sup>c</sup> Kidder's Demonstration, part 2. c. 16.; and Stanhope on the epistles and gospels, vol. 1. <sup>d</sup> Mark i. 3. <sup>e</sup> Chap. ii. 1. <sup>f</sup> Prideaux's Connection, part 2, lib. 9.



A. M.  
4034, &c.  
Ann Dom  
30, &c.  
from the  
beginning  
of the Go-  
spels to  
Math. ix.  
3 Mark ii.  
23. Luke  
vi. 1.

Joab <sup>s</sup> was nine months and twenty days in taking an account only <sup>h</sup> of the ten tribes of Israel, and in them only of such persons as were able to bear arms, we cannot think it unreasonable, that the execution of the survey, which extended to all manner of persons, their possessions, qualities, and other circumstances, should in so large a province take up less than three years.

It is to be observed farther, that though the registration was made at this time, yet the taxes thereupon were not paid till Judea was made a Roman province, and Publius Sulpitius Quirinus (who in Greek is called *Cyrenius*) was made governor of Syria; for, before Archelaus was deposed, the Jews paid their taxes to their princes, and their princes paid their tributes to the Roman emperors; but, when Archelaus was deposed, and Judea made a Roman province, the tax was levied according to the valuation that was made eleven years before.

Upon the whole therefore it appears, that in this affair there were two distinct particular actions, done at two distinct particular times, *viz.* first, the making of the survey, and then the levying the tax thereupon; so that, if what is said in Luke ii. 1. be understood of the former of these, and what is said in ver. 2 only of the latter, this will remove all difficulties, and reconcile that evangelist with Josephus; and that it is to be thus understood, we have the opinion of many learned interpreters.

The truth is, <sup>i</sup> this levy of the tax, (which was settled eleven years before,) in the time when Cyrenius was procurator of Syria <sup>\*</sup>, was attended with so many commotions and

<sup>s</sup> 2 Sam xxiv. 8.    <sup>h</sup> 1 Chron. xxi. 6.    <sup>i</sup> Beausobre's Annotations.

\* The account which Josephus gives us of this matter is this, — 'Cyrenius, at this time, says he, was sent governor by Caesar into Syria. He was a man of eminent fame, a Roman senator, and one that had passed through all the degrees and offices of honour up to the dignity of a consul. Coponius, who commanded the horse went along with him as governor of Judea: but Judea being already annexed to Syria, it was Cyrenius's province to tax and censure the Jews, and to make seizure of the monies and moveables of Archelaus. The Jews grumbled at this way of assessing at first, but, through the persuasion and authority of the high-priest Joazar, the son of Boethus, they were persuaded to submit and comply without any farther trouble, until one Judas, a Gaulonite, of the city

and seditious tumults, that the evangelist thought he could not make mention of its being decreed, without giving some hint of the manner of its being executed: And therefore he puts it in, by way of parenthesis, that *\* this taxing was first made (i. e. first put in execution) when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.*

There is a passage indeed in the prophet Isaiah, which St Matthew applies to the birth of Jesus, yet according to the context, it seems at first sight to have a more immediate reference to another event; but let us examine the history from whence it is taken. In the days of Ahaz, king of Judah, (and probably in the second or third year of his reign,) Rezin, king of Syria, and Pekah, king of Israel, united their forces to come against Jerusalem, which put the king and his people in such consternation, <sup>1</sup> *that their hearts were moved* (according to the scripture-expression) *as the trees of the wood are moved by the wind.* Hereupon Isaiah is commanded to take his little son Shear-jashub with him, and to go and meet Ahaz, in order to assure him, that the design formed against him by the two confederate kings should not prosper: But finding no credence with the king, the prophet undertakes to perform whatever miracle he should ask, in confirmation of the truth of what he had promised him. Ahaz however still refusing, out of a specious pretence of not being willing to tempt God, the prophet turns from him, and addressing himself to the nobles of the royal blood, <sup>m</sup> *Hear ye now, O house of David, says he, the Lord himself shall give you a sign. Behold*

A. M.  
4034 &c.  
Ann Dom  
30, &c.  
from the  
beginning  
of the Go-  
spels to  
Math. ix.  
8 M rk ii.  
13. Luke  
vi. 1.

Or in his  
application  
of the pro-  
phrey of  
Isaiah.  
c. vii. 14.

‘ of Gamala, together with one Sadducus a Pharisee, inveig-  
‘ led the people into a revolt. Taxes, they said, were only  
‘ marks of slavery, and therefore the whole nation should do  
‘ well to stand up for an universal liberty; and one lucky hit  
‘ would make them free and easy for ever, and advance them  
‘ in their reputation, as well as secure them in their possessions.  
‘ This was enough to put the multitude in tune for any sort of  
‘ mischief; nor is it to be expressed the havoc these turbulent  
‘ incendiaries made in the nation, and what murders, robber-  
‘ ies and depredations, without distinction of friend or foe,  
‘ they committed, under the pretence of advancing the com-  
‘ mon good of liberty and property, when nothing but passion  
‘ and private interest was at the bottom;’ *Antiq. lib. 18. c. 4.*

<sup>\*</sup> Luke ii. 2.

<sup>1</sup> Isaiah vii. 2.

<sup>m</sup> Ibid. ver. 13, 14.

A. M.  
4034. &c.  
Ann Dom  
30, &c.  
from the  
beginning  
of the Go-  
spels to  
Matth. ix.  
8. Mark ii.  
23. Luke  
vi. 1.

Behold a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

Now, not to insist upon the original word *Alma* \*, which (as <sup>a</sup> learned men have observed) signifies almost always a virgin untainted by man, and which the Greek translators before Christ (who were not interested in the controversy, and yet knew the signification of Hebrew words much better than any moderns can pretend to) have so rendered this place; and not to insist upon the tradition which prevailed among the Jews, not long before our Saviour's appearing, viz. That the Messiah should come into the world in such an extraordinary manner, that no man should know whence he was, and (as the Talmud expresses it) that his birth should be like the dew of the Lord, as drops from the grass, expecting not the labour,

or

\* *Alma* comes from the Hebrew word, which signifies to hide, and very fitly agrees with the customs of the eastern countries, who were wont to keep their daughters, while they were in their virginity, from all company and public conversation, and interviews. Thus, it is said, upon a public and extraordinary consternation, the virgins, who were kept in, ran, some to the gates and some to the walls, and others looked out of the windows, 2 Maccab iii. 19. But there is another, and more proper signification, which, from the same word, that signifies to hide or cover, this *Alma* will bear, viz. as it denotes one who has not known man, or, according to the scripture-phrase, one whose nakedness has not been uncovered. The knowledge of a woman is expressed in the law of Moses by uncovering her nakedness; and, agreeable hereunto, *Alma* is a most proper word for a virgin, who is covered, and whose nakedness was never uncovered, or revealed by the knowledge of man. This account is perfectly agreeable to the Hebrew manner of speech, and to the style of the law of Moses. But this is not all; as several learned men have shewn, that there is a great affinity between the Hebrew and Punic language, this makes the words of St Jerom more remarkable: *Lingua Punica, quæ de Hebræorum fontibus manare dicitur, proprie alma virgo appellatur; i. e.* In the Punic language, which is said to be derived from the Hebrew, she who is properly a virgin, is called *Alma*, in Isaiah, chap. vii. especially considering that St Matthew renders it by the word *παρθενος*, which signifies a virgin, properly so called, the very same word that the LXX interpreters made use of, about three hundred years before St Matthew wrote his gospel, and consequently long enough before this controversy arose between Jews and Christians: Bishop Kidder's Messiah, part 2. c. 5.

<sup>a</sup> Kidder's Demonstration, part. 2. c. 5.



or action of men; not to insist on these things, I say, (though they make very much for Christ's title to the prophecy,) ° how can we imagine, that, after so pompous an introduction, and so important a name, the prophet should mean no more at last, by a virgin's conceiving, than that a young woman should be with child? What, does Isaiah offer Ahaz a miracle, either in the depth or in the height above? and when he seems to tell the house of David, that God, of his own accord, would perform a greater work than they could ask, does he sink to a sign that nature produces every day? Is that to be called a wonder (which word implies an uncommon, surprising, and supernatural event) which happens constantly by the ordinary laws of generation? How little does such a birth answer the solemn apparatus which the prophet uses, to raise their expectation of some great matter? *Hear ye, O house of David, — Behold, the Lord himself will give you a sign, worthy of himself, and what is it? why, a young married woman shall be with child. How ridiculous must such a discovery make the prophet, and how highly must it enrage the audience to hear a man, at such a juncture as this, begin an idle and impertinent tale, which seems to banter and insult their misery, rather than administer any consolation under it.*

° But of what use or consolation could the future birth of the Messiah be to the house of David at that time? Of very great use, without all doubt; for it assured them of the truth of God's promise, in that he would not suffer them to be destroyed, nor <sup>a</sup> *the sceptre to depart from Judah*, until the Messiah came. It assured them of his almighty power, in that he could create a new thing in the earth, by making a virgin conceive, and thereby shew himself able to deliver them from their most potent enemies; and it assured them likewise of his peculiar favour, in that he had decreed the Messiah should descend from their family; so that the people to whom he had vouchsafed so high a dignity, might depend upon his protection, and, under the shadow of his wings, think themselves secure.

† In short, God had promised the Messiah should spring from the tribe of Judah, and from the family of David, even while that tribe, and that family, continued a polity

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undestroyed;

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4<sup>th</sup> 34. &c.  
Ann Dom.  
30. &c.  
from the  
beginning  
of the Go.  
spels to  
Matt. ix. 8.  
Mark ii. 23.  
Luke vi. 1.

° Bishop Chandler's Demonstration of Christianity. ° Collins's Grounds and reasons, page 43.

† Gen. xlix. 10.

† Spanheim's Dub. evang. part 1. dub. 27.

A. M.  
4034. &c.  
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beginning  
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undestroyed; and therefore, since that promise was not yet absolved, nor the Messiah as yet come, there was no fear of the extinction of Judah, and the house of David, at that time, whatever their present distress might be; but as God's promises were immutable, they had all manner of reason to believe, that the enemies now combined against them would, by some turn of Providence or other, be disappointed in their design.

Why our  
Lord chose  
a virgin  
that was  
married to  
be his mo  
ther.

Thus one great prophecy at least in the Old, as well as sundry promises in the New Testament, made it a thing necessary that when the Son of God came to be incarnate, he should be born of a pure and immaculate virgin; and it is impious to dispute the possibility of the thing, when God Almighty was the agent of it: But why this virgin should be married, rather than a single woman, is the other question we are to resolve. And in order to do this, we must observe, that by this means Mary's genealogy, not only by her father's side, (which St Luke has recorded,) but by her husband's likewise, (which St Matthew has done,) came to be deduced; and so we have a double testimony, that she sprang from the seed of David, and, according to the promises of old, was the true mother of the Messiah; that by this means we have the testimony of her husband Joseph concerning her virginity, who was not a little uneasy in his mind, before he had satisfaction given him by the angel, and might possibly have been the first that would have blasted her reputation, had he not been fully convinced of her innocence and modesty; that by this means our Lord's birth was secured against all imputation of spuriousness, and his mother's character protected from the persecution of opprobrious tongues, which she must have endured, (if not the censure of the law,) and brought withal a perpetual scandal upon her family, had not her pregnancy, by the operation of the Holy Ghost, been concealed under the umbrage of a common husband; and that by this means our Lord was provided with a guardian in his childhood and minority, and his mother with a companion in her journey she was shortly to take, from Nazareth to Bethany, and from thence into Egypt, and both of them with a supporter, who, by honest labour in his proper occupation, might provide them with the necessaries of life.

These,

These, and several other reasons, might be assigned for our Lord's chusing to be born of a virgin that went under the notion of being married; but how came he to be a man of poverty and affliction, to live meanly, and die ignominiously, when (had he been the true Messiah) he must, according to the representations made of him in the prophets, have appeared as one of the greatest monarchs in the world. This is the grand objection of the Jews; and therefore to give it a proper solution, it ought to be considered that the Messiah, in order to accomplish the prophecies concerning him, was to sustain three different characters; for he was to be a prophet and a priest, as well as a king. The predictions indeed which refer to his kingly office, are more in number, and enlarged upon more copiously, than either of the other; yet both the other are so essential to the character of the Messiah, that had any one of these been wanting in him, the scheme of man's redemption had been broken and imperfect: And yet it is certain, that these three offices require operations, not only distinct and peculiar to each, but such as could not equally be exercised at one and the same time, by one and the same person.

As a prophet, the Messiah was not only to teach and instruct his people, but to undergo the common fate of prophets, in being despised, contradicted, persecuted, and in bearing testimony of the truth of his doctrine, by the example of his sufferings for it. As a priest, he was to make sacrifice for the sins of his people, which in this case could not be otherwise done than by offering his own blood, and consequently dying in their stead. Now, both these, in the course of things appointed by God, were to go before the entrance upon his kingly office, because the prophecies mentioned this last as a recompence for the faithful discharge of the other two. This is a matter that both the <sup>u</sup> royal and <sup>x</sup> evangelical prophet express so very plainly, that St Paul in effect does but expound these passages, when he tells the Hebrews <sup>v</sup>, that Jesus, *for the suffering of death, was crowned with glory and honour*: and the Philippians <sup>z</sup>, that *for his taking upon him the form of a servant, and becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, God had highly exalted him, and given him a name, which is above every*

X x 2

name,

<sup>s</sup> Stanhope on the epistles and gospels, vol. 3. and his 7th sermon at Boyle's lectures. <sup>u</sup> Psal. xxii. <sup>x</sup> Isaiah liii.

<sup>v</sup> Chap. ii. 9. <sup>z</sup> Chap. ii. 8, 9.

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In what  
sense he is,  
and will be,  
a most po-  
tent prince.



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Ann Dom  
30, &c.  
from the  
beginning  
of the Go-  
spels to  
Matt. ix, 8  
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Luke vi. 1.

name, &c. Since therefore his regal office was not to commence till after he had accomplished his other two, to complain, that his kingly power was not exercised at his first coming, is to misunderstand the prophecies, and confound the order of events: it is to expect a full accomplishment of predictions within a very narrow space, that strictly belong to an office still in exercise, and to which, the Scripture says, <sup>a</sup> *there shall be no end.*

2. It is to be observed farther, that the style and manner of the prophets, especially when they treat of subjects uncommon, sublime, and spiritual, abound with figurative schemes of speech, and such pompous and bold metaphors and descriptions, taken from sensible objects, as awaken in our minds the most lofty imaginations we are capable of. This the Jews themselves make no difficulty to allow, and <sup>b</sup> some of their greatest doctors have laid it down for a rule, in the interpretation of the prophets, that in many places they are not literally to be understood, by reason of those metaphorical expressions, whose true intent is to represent things, according to our capacity, by images familiar to our senses. If therefore most of these great and pompous things that are said in the prophets concerning the glorious reign of the Messiah, may be understood of the spiritual benefits which we have received by his coming; such as, the grace, of our regeneration and sanctification, the wisdom of his laws, the comforts of his ordinances, the holy and peaceable temper which his gospel inspires, the large extent of its propagation, and the blessed effects which in all places where it is sincerely believed and practised it produces: If things be reduced to this sense, I say, I cannot see but that the character of a powerful prince has been fulfilled in our Saviour already; for what king was ever so prosperous as he, who by the propagation of his gospel, has enlarged his dominions so wonderfully over the most distant regions of the habitable world? Or what conquest was ever so glorious as that which he hath gained over the errors and prejudices, the lusts and passions of wicked and mistaken men, nay, even over all the powers of darkness, and sin, and death, and hell?

But be it granted, (as it seems indeed very probable,) that several passages in the prophets relate to the temporal greatness,

<sup>a</sup> Isaiah ix. 7.  
<sup>b</sup> Maim. More Nevoch, part 2. c. 39.  
47. ; Menas Ben. Israel Qu. in Gen. xxx.

greatness, prosperity, and peace, that shall attend the government of the Messiah; yet we are to consider,

3. That, before the consummation of all things, there will be an enlargement of Christ's kingdom, even here upon earth. For, though he have all power both in heaven and earth, already vested in the human nature, united with his own divine person, yet is not that power so visibly and fully executed, as it shall one day be; nor are all those glorious effects as yet accomplished, which the prophets foretold, when describing the victorious and peaceable, the unlimited and everlasting, dominion of the Messiah. The enlightening of the Jews and Gentiles, by bringing such multitudes of the one, and so many nations of the other sort, to the acknowledgment of the truth, is already a partial completion of the prophecies; but there is still a nobler in reserve, when the fulness of both shall come in. He reigns now actually in the hearts of men, and subdues the most formidable of our enemies, by the holiness of his laws, and the mighty operations of his grace; but that dominion and conquest will be much more absolute, when the time comes for every enemy to be utterly destroyed. Though therefore the whole be not, yet abundantly enough has already been fulfilled, to make us acquiesce in a steadfast assurance, that what is still behind will most certainly come to pass. For sure, how meanly soever they that consider things imperfectly, may think of a despised and crucified man; yet there is nothing so gloriously great that may not most reasonably be expected from that very man when <sup>c</sup> *declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.*

It is made a strong objection by the Socinians, against our Saviour's being the Son of God, that, at the time of his baptism, the Holy Ghost descended upon him, for which there had been no manner of occasion, say they, had the Divinity (which was certainly no less powerful than the Holy Ghost) been personally united to him. While our Blessed Saviour was discoursing concerning his approaching death, and a voice from heaven was heard speaking unto him, he told the people, (who seemed to be divided in their opinions of it,) <sup>d</sup> *This voice came not because of me, i. e. to satisfy me of the divine favour, or to comfort me against the agonies of death, but for your sake,* that

A. M.

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Ann Dom

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from the

beginning

of the Go-

spels to

Math. ix.

8. Mark ii.

3. Luke

vi 1.

<sup>c</sup> Rom. i. 4.<sup>d</sup> John xii. 30.

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of the Go-  
spels to  
Matth ix.  
8. Mark ii.  
23. Luke  
vi. 1.

that ye might believe in me: And, in like manner, it might be a sufficient answer to this objection, that this visible descent of the Holy Ghost upon our Saviour *was not for his sake*, or to convey any virtue or power, that he was not equally possessed of by the divine nature that resided in him, but for the sake of the Baptist, and those that were then present with him, even to inform them of the excellency of his person, and divine mission: For so the voice, which immediately follows the prodigy, *‘ This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased: ‘ Hear ye him*, plainly shews, that this whole transaction was designed for the instruction of all the company. Our Saviour indeed was now entering upon his prophetic office, and fit it was, that the world should have some previous notice of it, before he came to open his commission. When he came to offer himself to John for baptism, John indeed, by some sudden inspiration, knew him; but he had not, as yet, made any public declaration of that knowledge; and therefore God took care to give the company this glorious manifestation of his being his Son, and a person sanctified by this descent of the Holy Ghost upon him to declare his will to the world, (according to the prophecy <sup>e</sup> concerning him,) and whose words and doctrine it therefore concerned all men to hear and obey. Our Blessed Saviour indeed, as he was God, had no need of this unction of the Holy Spirit, but as he was to execute the prophetic office, it was expedient for him to have it: For, as a prophet is not to speak in his own name, but in the name of God, and what he has suggested to him by the Spirit of God; so this prophetic office was to be performed, not by the divine nature of our Lord, but by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. *‘ We must therefore (with a great di-*  
*‘ vine <sup>h</sup> of our church) distinguish between the excellen-*  
*‘ cies and perfections of Christ, which flowed from the hy-*  
*‘ postatical union of the two natures, and those which*  
*‘ flowed from the donation and anointing of the Holy Spi-*  
*‘ rit. From the hypostatical union of the natures flow-*  
*‘ ed the infinite dignity of his person, his impeccability, his*  
*‘ self-sufficiency to fulfil the law, and satisfy the divine jus-*  
*‘ tice; as from the anointing of the Spirit flowed his know-*  
*‘ ledge of all evangelical mysteries, the doctrines and pre-*  
*‘ cepts*

<sup>e</sup> Matth. iii. 17.  
xiii. 1.

<sup>f</sup> Ibid. chap. xvii. 5.  
<sup>h</sup> Dr Lightfoot, on Mark xiii. 32.

<sup>g</sup> Isaiah



‘cepts which he delivered in his Father’s name, and the  
 ‘many miraculous works which he did in confirmation of  
 ‘his mission and doctrine.’ For this is plain to every one  
 that looks into the gospels, that almost in every page our  
 Saviour owns his mission from God ; that the doctrines  
 which he taught were not his own, but God’s ; that they  
 were all dictated by the Spirit of God ; and that the mi-  
 racles which he exhibited, in testimony of these, proceed-  
 ed from the same Spirit of God. Upon the whole, there-  
 fore, we may conclude, that Jesus Christ being now in a  
 state of humiliation, and emptied of the form of God,  
 acted, in things relating immediately to his prophetic of-  
 fice, not as God, but only as a prophet sent from God ;  
 not by the power of his divine nature, but of that Spirit  
 by which he was anointed, and sanctified to that office ;  
 though (notwithstanding this quiescence in the Deity) be-  
 ing still God, of the same essence derived from the Father,  
 he might do many other things by virtue of his divinity,  
 such as discerning the hearts of all men, walking upon the  
 sea, and stilling the stormy winds with a word, &c. And  
 as this divinity was part of the doctrine he was to publish,  
 he might, without any contradiction to himself, assert,  
 that God was properly his Father, and he properly his Son ;  
 that he and his Father were one ; and that *all men were to*  
*worship the Son, even as they worshipped the Father.*

Something of the like nature is to be said in relation to  
 our Saviour’s being tempted by the devil, viz. that though  
 his divinity did set him far above the utmost opposition of  
 any created being, yet did not that divinity exert itself up-  
 on all occasions, but sometimes suspended its operations,  
 and was quiescent, as we said before. <sup>k</sup> That the divi-  
 nity was thus quiescent in Christ, until he entered upon  
 the public exercise of his prophetic office, is generally  
 thought by most orthodox divines ; that, in all the actions  
 relating to the execution of that his office, it ceased in the  
 like manner to act, we have just now endeavoured to prove ;  
 and it is generally thought, that this was the case of his  
 temptation by the devil, in which his divine perfections ly-  
 ing by, (as it were,) and forbearing to engage, he is to be  
 considered abstractly as a man, though much more perfect  
 than any other man. For fit it was, that he (who for this  
 very

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<sup>i</sup> Vid. Whitby’s Preface to the gospel of St. John. <sup>k</sup> Stan-  
 hope on the epistles and gospels, vol 2.

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4034. &c  
Ann Dom  
30. &c.  
from the  
beginning  
of the Go-  
spels to  
Matth. ix  
2. Mark ii.  
23 Luke  
vi. 1.

very reason, perhaps, is called the second Adam) should overcome the great enemy of mankind, in that very nature alone, and unassisted, wherein the first Adam was so miserably foiled.

Whether the devil might know that our Saviour was in reality the Son of God, or only some peculiar favourite of his, divines are at a stand to determine. It is the observation of Origen, that <sup>l</sup> all the while that our Saviour was under the temptation, he never confessed himself to be the Son of God: And therefore, <sup>m</sup> since the dispensation of the gospel was not fully and perfectly understood by good angels, but gradually manifested to them, it is no wonder that the devil should be ignorant of the mysteries of the gospel, particularly that *great mystery of Godliness, God's manifestation in the flesh*. The devil therefore, seeing our Saviour, after he had been <sup>n</sup> declared the Son of God, so long in the wilderness with wild beasts, and hungry, without any food to sustain him, might be induced to question whether he was indeed the Son of God, in the most proper and highest sense of the words, and thereupon incited to assail him: But if even he knew him never so well, such is his inveterate malice, that it hath often prevailed with him to attempt things very foolish and impossible. For what could be more so, than for a creature to attempt to be like God, or to annul the truth of the prophecies concerning Christ? What could be more pernicious to him than the death of the Lord of life for the redemption of mankind; and yet this he attempted with the utmost eagerness, and by setting all his instruments to work to accomplish it, though <sup>o</sup> *it was impossible for our Lord to be held under the power of death*: Whatever Satan, therefore, might conceive of Christ, (as Petavius retorts the argument upon the head of Crellius,) he could not but certainly know from the Scriptures, that he was to be the Redeemer of mankind, and the author of their salvation; that he was *the seed of the woman who was to bruise his head, to sit on the throne of his father David, and there rule for ever*: And therefore, knowing all this, he could not hope to prevail in his temptations of our Lord, unless he could believe that he was able to reverse both the decrees and oath of God.

<sup>l</sup> Hom. 6. in Lucam.      <sup>m</sup> Eph. i. 10. and 1 Pet. i. 12.  
<sup>n</sup> Matth. iii. 17.      <sup>o</sup> Acts ii. 24, 25.

God. Whether therefore the devil knew, or knew not, our Saviour, it may well be deemed an insatiation in him, to think of being able to pervert him, as he had done our first parents in their obedience to God; but then, it was far from being a foolish or unnecessary thing for our Lord thus to suffer himself to be tempted, <sup>a</sup> since thereby he hath instructed us, that not any, the best, and most exalted degree of virtue sets men above temptations; and since thereby he has encouraged us to hope for his assistance and support under the like circumstances; both because <sup>r</sup> *himself hath suffered, being tempted*, and because <sup>s</sup> *he was in all points tempted like as we are, he cannot but be touched with the feeling of our infirmities*. These were the true ends and reasons, why our Saviour suffered temptation, and the proper and natural inference from hence is that which the same author to the Hebrews makes, <sup>t</sup> *Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help us in time of need*.

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There are few things wherein mankind seem to be more agreed, than in the acknowledgment and acceptance of miracles, as an authentic and indisputable testimony, that the persons intrusted with such power were employed by God; because the constant apprehensions, which both reason and revelation have given us of God, are, that he will not employ his power (as no true miracles can be done without the concurrence of his power) to deceive his creatures; and therefore, the reasoning of Nicodemus, when he came to visit our Saviour, was right, <sup>u</sup> *We know that thou art a teacher come from God, because no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him*. Since miracles then are the avowed effects of a divine power, we must certainly be mistaken in our judgment of them, when, with regard to their author, we esteem one greater than another. In effects indeed, that are produced by human power, we are apt to say, that some of them are greater than others, *i. e.* that they require more and greater degrees of power for the production of them; but this distinction vanishes in our consideration of the Supreme Being, to whose omnipotence the greatest effect we can imagine, gives no limitation, but is equal with the smallest, under

Miracles,  
in respect  
of God, all  
alike,

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<sup>a</sup> Stanhope on the epistles and gospels, vol. 2.

<sup>r</sup> Heb. ii.

<sup>s</sup> Ibid. chap. iv, 15.

<sup>t</sup> Ibid. ver. 16.

<sup>u</sup> John

iii. 2.



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from the  
beginning  
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That de-  
moniacs  
were diffe-  
rent from  
people dis-  
eased.

der the compass of his acting. To us perhaps, it may seem a greater cure to dispossess a demon, than to drive away a fever; but in the hand of the Son of God, while he dwelt among us, they were operations equally easy; and yet a misconception in this matter has certainly led some into an opinion, that the several demoniacs mentioned in the gospels, were only so many persons afflicted with some strange and uncommon diseases.

But that these demons, or evil spirits, which our Saviour, his apostles, and the primitive Christians, expelled out of the bodies of men, could not be diseases, is plain both from the Scriptures, and ecclesiastical writers, who make a constant and manifest distinction between the curing diseases and casting out of devils; for, when the evangelist tells us, that <sup>x</sup> *they brought unto Christ all sick people, that were taken with divers diseases, and those which were possessed with devils, and those that were lunatic, and had the palsy, and he healed them*; when <sup>y</sup> *he gave to the apostles power against evil spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sicknesses and diseases*; and accordingly, <sup>z</sup> *they healed many that were sick with divers diseases, and cast out many devils*; when Irenæus <sup>a</sup> informs us, that the Christians, in his days, ‘did truly cast out devils, and heal the sick by imposition of hands;’ and <sup>b</sup> Origen, that ‘they cast out devils, and healed many diseases;’ can any one of tolerable understanding think, that the diseases healed, and the devils cast out, were one and the same thing?

That there were evil spirits of this kind, the Holy Scriptures have taken such abundant care to acquaint us with their origin and fall, their names and numbers, their government and orders, their malicious designs, and employments, &c. that no one can doubt of their existence, who believes these holy oracles to be true. That both among the Jews and Gentiles, before our Saviour’s advent, men were possessed with these evil spirits, is evident from the testimony of <sup>c</sup> Josephus, who tells us of a very powerful form of exorcism, which descended from Solomon, who learned of God; and from the testimony of <sup>d</sup> Plutarch, who acquaints us, that the exorcists of most nations ad-  
vised

<sup>x</sup> Matth. iv. 24.

<sup>y</sup> Ibid. chap. x. 1.

<sup>z</sup> Mark i 34.

<sup>a</sup> Lib. 2 c. 16. <sup>b</sup> Contr. Cels. lib. 1. <sup>c</sup> Antiq. lib. 8. c. 2.

<sup>d</sup> Sympof. lib. 1. q. 5.

vifed thofe that were poffeffed, to repeat the Ephesian letters. And, that thefe evil fpirits, in our Saviour's time, were diftinct fubftances, and not the difeafes of mankind, is evident from the circumftances of their ejection, from their expoftulating with him *What have we to do with thee? Art thou come to deftroy us? Art thou come to torment us before the time?* And from his commanding them fometimes to be filent, and fometimes to come out of the man, and enter into him no more, &c.

The truth is, thefe apoftate fpirits had gotten fo far poffeffion of the world, that they began to rival God in his worfhip; and therefore one end of his Son's incarnation is faid to be this, *e that he might deftroy the works of the devil, and f overcome the ftrong one, and divide his fpoils.* And this, by the way, may fuggelt a reafon, why at or about the time of our Saviour's advent, and perhaps more efpecially in the places which he frequented, God might permit the devil to exert himfelf in an unfual manner, in order to be the more fignally triumphed over by the Saviour of the world, and thofe that were delegated by him to convert mankind to his religion. Nay, had I leifure to proceed to ecclefiaftical writers, I might eafily fhew how victorious the name of *Chrift* was over thefe principalities and powers of darknefs, even after his departure out of this world; for 'that our Lord was fent for the deftruction of thefe evil fpirits, you may now learn, fays Juftin Martyr, *g from what is done before your eyes; for many Chriftians, throughout all the world, and in every city of your empire, have healed many that were poffeffed of the devil, and ftill do they eject them, by the invocation of the name of Jefus, whom none of your incanters, conjurers, or forcerers, were able to expel.*' And give me a man, (fays Tertullian, *h in that noble challenge of his to the Heathen powers,) give me a man here before your tribunals, that is vifibly poffeffed by the devil; and if, when he is commanded by any Chriftian to declare what he is, he don't immediately confefs himfelf to be a devil, not daring to lie to a Chriftian, then let the blood of that Chriftian be fhed before you, in that very place.' But I forbear, and fo proceed to the*

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next

*e* 1 John iii, 8.*f* Luke xi, 22, 22.*g* Apol. i. p. 45.*h* Apol. c. 23.

A. M. next objection, which relates to our Saviour's behaviour  
4034. &c at the marriage feast.  
Ann Dom

30, &c. Our Blessed Saviour indeed was a person of so grave and  
from the serious a deportment, that whatever instances we find of  
beginning his pity and compassion to mankind, of his grieving and  
of the Go- being troubled, and even weeping upon some occasions, we  
spels to can meet with none of his laughing, nor any token of a  
Matth. ix. mirth or joy extraordinary, in the whole history of his  
8 Mark ii life : But we must not from hence infer, that he was of a  
23. Luke stiff and precise temper, or in any degree an enemy to such  
vi. 1.

That our forms of civility, or social usages, as were then in prac-  
Saviour tice. If therefore we may be allowed to suppose (what  
might, con- seems indeed highly probable) that this marriage at Cana  
sistently was between persons of his own kindred and acquaintance;  
with his and that by the very rules of celebrating such festivals a-  
character, mong the Jews, all excess and intemperance was excluded,  
go to a mar- then will it follow, that it could be no disparagement to  
riage, our Saviour's character to accept of the invitation that was  
made him, and to be present at such a meeting.

Among us indeed (especially among the vulgar sort) there are sometimes, on these occasions, liberties taken that are not so justifiable; but, among the Jews, there was always the greatest decency and sobriety imaginable observed in the celebration of their marriages. To this purpose a governor of the feast (as some say of the sacerdotal race) was always chosen, whose office it was to have the superintendency of the dishes and wine, and to oblige the guests to observe all the decorums that religion required; and not only so, but other persons, at this time, were likewise appointed to break glass-vessels, as a common signal, to give the company notice, that they had already drank enough, and were not permitted to run to excess. Under this regulation, it is scarce imaginable that the guests, at a Jewish marriage, could be guilty of any intemperance, and least of all at this in Galilee, where our Saviour's presence and observation, the gravity of his behaviour, and the seasonableness of his discourse, might well be presumed to heighten the decorum, and to keep all the company under a proper restraint.

That there was so excessive drinking there. What therefore the governor of the feast says to the bridegroom, <sup>k</sup> in relation to the water that was turned into

<sup>i</sup> Lewis's Antiquities of the Hebrew republic, vol 3.  
<sup>k</sup> John ii. 10.



into wine, is to be understood only as a general representation of a custom, usual at other festivals, which was, to bring the best wine at first, and towards the conclusion, that which was worse; which custom (as the governor tells him) was not observed here; for the difference between this entertainment and others is, that *thou hast kept the good wine until now*.<sup>1</sup> So that, *when men have well drunk*, is only a circumstance thrown in to illustrate the comparison, or describe the latter end of a feast, and has no manner of reference to the condition of the company then present. But allowing the words *ὅταν μεθύσῃσι* to be a description of the condition that the company were then in, yet it will by no means follow, that they had proceeded to any intemperance, because the words are equally capable of an innocent, as well as vicious meaning.<sup>m</sup> *Μεθεῖν* indeed, in its primitive signification, means no more than *drinking after the sacrifice*; and as there is nothing in the etymology that determines this to be done to excess, or beyond the proper bounds of joy in a festival, so there are several instances in Scripture, wherein it was certainly done according to the rules of sobriety and moderation. Thus, (to mention one out of many,) in the LXX's version of Genesis, where it is said, that <sup>n</sup> *Joseph's brethren drank, and were merry with him*, the words are *ἔμεθυσαν μετ' αὐτοῦ*, and yet no one can imagine, but that, in their present circumstances, thinking no other than that he was the governor of Egypt, and being apprehensive that he had no good design against them, they were too much upon their guard, and solicitous about their own safety, to give any way to intemperance in his presence: And, if the expression here, and in <sup>o</sup> several other passages, may be taken in a virtuous sense, we cannot but conclude, (unless we can suppose that St John designed to expose his Master's behaviour upon this occasion,) that he intended we should understand him in the most favourable acceptance.

We, indeed, in our translation, say, that the water-pots, wherein the wine was created, <sup>p</sup> contained two or three firkins a-piece; but some, who have looked more nicely into *μετρῆς*, or *measure*, here spoken of, <sup>q</sup> have brought it so low, as to make the whole six pots hold no more

<sup>1</sup> Dr Pearce's Vindication of our Saviour's miracles, part 3.  
<sup>m</sup> Ibid.      <sup>n</sup> Chap. xliii. 34.      <sup>o</sup> Vid. Whitby's Annot.  
ad locum.      <sup>p</sup> John ii. 6.      <sup>q</sup> Vid. Cumberland, of  
weights and measures.

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from the  
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Math. ix.  
8 Mark ii.  
23. Luke  
vi 1

A. M.  
4034, &c.  
Ann Dom  
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from the  
beginning  
of the Go-  
spels to  
Matt. ix. 8  
Mark ii. 23  
Luke vi. 1

more than about fourteen or fifteen gallons of our English measure. But not to descend so low, we will suppose, at present, that the quantity of wine made by our Saviour at this feast, was as large as our translation represents it; yet, whoever considers the nature of the Jewish marriages, how they were celebrated with feastings and rejoicings, not only on the day of solemnity, (as it is with us,) but for six or seven days after, and that at these feasts, not only all their relations, and neighbours, and acquaintance, were invited, but that it was well taken likewise, if any others (though not invited) would come to partake of the entertainment, and bear a share in the joy: Whoever considers this, I say, cannot but imagine, that a very large quantity of wine must needs be requisite at such a time, since it was to be a supply, not for that day only, but for all the succeeding days, until the time of the feasting was expired.

Or if there  
were, Christ  
not charge-  
able with

Nay, even supposing farther, that our Lord, upon this occasion, did not confine himself to a precise quantity, proportionate to the company, or period of the festival, and (what is more) <sup>r</sup> that some of the company might abuse his liberality by their intemperance, (which is a concession not to be gathered from the text,) yet he cannot therefore be charged with the administering to their excess, by making such an ample provision, any more than we can charge the providence of God with being instrumental to all the gluttony and drunkenness which is committed in the world, merely because he affords that meat and drink, which men of inordinate appetites abuse to excess. The truth is, as it is an high commendation of providence, that it crowns us with plenty, (whatever use we make of it,) and bestows upon us all things richly to enjoy; so was it not unbecoming a person, invested with a divine commission, to give, on this occasion, an eminent instance of his flowing liberality, and, by his generous provision for the family, to leave a grateful memorial of his benevolent regard to two persons that very likely were his relations, and had just entered into the honourable state of matrimony.

No inde-  
cency in  
our Lord's  
reply to his  
mother.

Since therefore our Lord answered, in so free and plentiful a manner, his mother's request at last, there seems to be something in their supposition, who, from the propriety <sup>s</sup> of the Greek expression, think that his mother spake

<sup>r</sup> Whitby's Annot. in locum.

<sup>s</sup> ὡς ἐπαύριον αὐτῇ, ver. 3.

spake to him, before the wine was out, but when it grew so low that she plainly perceived there would not be enough for the company; and therefore our Saviour's reply to her will very justly bear this sense, *Τί τοῖς ἐγώ;* 'What is it to you or me?' i. e. the care of providing wine upon this occasion does not properly belong to you or me; but admitted it did, *My hour is not yet come.* It is too soon as yet to set about it; because it is highly fitting that the necessity of that supernatural supply, which I intend them, should be a little more felt, in order to recommend the benefit itself, and to give the manner of attaining it a power of making a deeper impression on their minds.'

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beginning  
of the Go-  
spels to  
Math. ix.  
8. Mark ii.  
23. Luke  
vi. 1.

This seems to be no unnatural construction of the words, and removes all the seeming harshness of our Saviour's answer, *Woman, what have I to do with thee?* We mistake the matter, however, very much, if we think that the word *γυνή*, which we render *woman*, was any title of disrespect or indifference, (as it seems to be in our translation,) since it is frequently used by the best authors, when the highest marks of esteem are intended. The polite Xenophon himself puts it in the mouth of one of his Persian chiefs, when he was addressing himself to a captive lady, and comforting her under her unfortunate circumstances; and certainly a time there was, that our Lord called his mother by this appellation, when he was far from being harsh or undutiful to her, even when he was hanging on the cross, and tenderly recommending both his mother to the care of his beloved apostle, and that apostle to his mother's love and affection, 'Woman, behold thy son. So little does our Saviour's conduct, in this whole transaction, deserve these horrid and impious censures which of late have been thrown upon it!

Whatever some modern Jews and infidels may alledge against the abuse (as they pretend) which the writers of the New Testament have put upon the prophecies of the Old, by applying them to a wrong sense; "no man need be told, that an attempt of this nature had been as impertinent, the affront to man's reason as insolent, and the event as fruitless, nay as fatal to their cause, had they imposed a false, or even controverted, sense upon the predictions confessedly relating to the Messiah, as it would have been had

That the  
prophecies  
in the Old  
Testament  
are not mis-  
applied in  
the New.

<sup>t</sup> John xix. 25. 27.  
lectures, sermon viii.

<sup>u</sup> Stanhope's Sermons at Boyle's



A. M.  
4034. &c.  
Ann Dom  
30, &c  
from the  
beginning  
of the Go  
spels to  
Matt ix, 8  
Mark ii,  
23. Luke  
vi. 1.

had they urged such predictions as were not acknowledged to belong to him at all. The truth is, if the Jews understood the prophecies relating to the Messiah in one sense, and the apostles, in their address to them, applied them in another, we cannot see how they could ever have made one proselyte, being in the same condition with what St Paul describes, when he tells us, that *\* he who speaketh in an unknown tongue* (and why not he that speaketh in an unknown meaning?) *speaketh to the air, and becometh a Barbarian to him, that heareth but understandeth him not.* So that every Jew converted to the Christian faith is an implicit proof of the apostles applying the ancient prophecies in a sense that was then current and familiar to them.

That the famous prophecy in Isaiah <sup>v</sup> is thus applied by St Matthew <sup>2</sup>, to prove that Christ was born of an immaculate virgin, we took occasion, in our answer to the fourth of these objections, to shew. The remaining allegation is, that the name of the person of whom the prophet speaks was to be Immanuel; whereas the name of that son of Mary, of whom St Matthew speaks by God's express command, was Jesus; and therefore the words of the prophet are misapplied by the evangelist.

In what  
sense Jesus  
was Imma-  
nuel.

Now, nothing is more common in Scripture, than by the calling or naming of a person or thing, not to mean that that person or thing would be commonly distinguished by that name, but only that it should have such properties and qualities in it as that name did denote; or, in other words, that it should really be what the full sense of that name imported. Thus, of the city of Jerusalem it is foretold by the prophet, <sup>a</sup> that it should be called the city of righteousness, when it really was to be such a city; for in the foregoing words it is promised, that God would restore her judges as at the first, and her counsellors as at the beginning. And in like manner, though it be declared by this prophet <sup>b</sup>, that the wonderful child which God promised to the house of David should be called Immanuel; yet if he was but what that name properly imports, *God with us*, in a most eminent and peculiar manner, it is not to be doubted but that the prophecy

<sup>\*</sup> 1 Cor. xiv. 2.

<sup>a</sup> Isaiah i. 26.

<sup>v</sup> Chap. vii. 14.

<sup>b</sup> Ibid. chap. vii. 14.

<sup>2</sup> Chap. i. 23.

phesy received its full completion in the person of our Saviour Christ.

A. M.

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from the

beginning

of the Go-

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Matth ix.

8. Mark ii.

13. Luke

vi 1

For, besides God's universal presence, there is a presence of favour and distinction, whereby he is said to be, in a more peculiar manner, with those whom he loves, and blesses above others. And, in this regard, the child here spoken of, is justly called Immanuel, because (as St Paul speaks) *God was in him, reconciling the world to himself, for his sake and sufferings not imputing their trespasses unto them; so that by him they, who were some time afar off, are made nigh, have access to the Father are accepted in the beloved, and become, of enemies and strangers, friends and children, insomuch, that God vouchsafes to dwell in them, and to be one of them.* And, as God unites us to himself by grace, so did he, in this child, condescend, by an ineffable generation, to unite our substance and nature to himself, *to be perfect God, and perfect man, that so he might be the first-born among many brethren, and redeem the children from death, who are partakers of flesh and blood, by himself taking part of the same.* Let it not then be any more objected, that the child in the prophecy could not be called Immanuel, whom we confess to have been called Jesus; for he is therefore our Immanuel, because our Jesus; therefore, most eminently, most literally, *God with us*, because, by so miraculous an union, a *Saviour of his people from their sins.*

It may seem perhaps surprising to some, that St Matthew should so frequently introduce his citations with a *This was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet*: But whoever considers the idiom of the Hebrew tongue, cannot but know, that the phrase, answering to the expressions, *that it might be fulfilled*, means no more, than that *hereby was verified*, or that *this event answered to the prediction*, or the like. Nay, the Jews were accustomed to say, that a passage of Scripture was then fulfilled, when any thing happened that was applicable to it; and therefore it is no wonder, that St Matthew, who himself was a Jew, and very probably wrote his gospel in the Hebrew tongue for the benefit of his countrymen, should naturally fall into their style and manner of expression.

St Mat-

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manner of

introducing

his quota-

tions.

Vol. V. No. 25.

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Now

2 Cor. v. 19.

Eph. ii. 13. 18.

Ibid. chap. i. 6.

Rom. viii. 29. Heb. ii. 14.

A. M.  
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from the  
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of the Go-  
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Matth. x  
8. Mark ii  
23. Luke  
vi. 1.

The cita-  
tion in  
Mat. ii 15

Now, whoever considers the state of the Jews in Egypt, their bondage, and danger of utter extinction, by reason of the decree which passed for the destruction of all their male children, (had not the providence of God prevented the execution of it) will soon perceive the cause, why Egypt is made in Scripture the common figure and emblem of extreme danger, and imminent death; and why a deliverance out of Egypt should be applied to every great act of preservation, where there seemed to be no visible means of escape; insomuch, that whenever any instance of such a watchful and protecting providence happened, it was an usual and proverbial speech among the Jews (who were wont then, as they are still, to apply sentences out of holy writ to the common occurrences of life) to say, in Scripture phrase, *Out of Egypt have I called my son*, or *He hath called him out of Egypt*, i. e. he hath rescued him from the jaws of death, or from the like danger that the Israelites were in when he brought them out of Egypt with a mighty hand and a stretched-out arm. Since Joseph then was ordered to flee to Egypt, and to tarry there until Herod was dead, for this reason, because Herod sought the young child's life; this distinguishing preservation of Jesus, by means of his retreat, till the danger was over, will justify the evangelist (even though it had been any other country, as well as Egypt, whereunto he retired) in applying to him the proverbial saying upon that occasion, <sup>s</sup> *Out of Egypt, i. e. out of manifest danger, have I called my Son*.

In Matt. ii.  
27.

The deportation of the ten tribes from their native country into a foreign land, there to die, or live in slavery, was so grievous a calamity, that the prophet Jeremiah <sup>b</sup> (by way of prosopopœia) introduces Rachel, the favourite wife of Jacob, that great progenitor of the Israelites, making bitter lamentation for their loss, and refusing all consolation, because there was no hopes of their recovery. And the murder of so many innocent babes at Bethlehem, by the bloody decree of Herod, was an event so dolorous to their tender parents, that the evangelist, when he came to relate it, thought he might justly (by way of accommodation) apply the words of the prophet, and, in the name of all the miserable mothers that had lost their children, make Rachel, upon this occasion, (and as a farther accomplishment of the prophecy,) return

to



to her weeping again. The rather, because Rachel, having been long dead before the captivity, may, with equal propriety, by the evangelist, as she is by the prophet, be introduced weeping; the rather, because she was <sup>1</sup> so fond a lover of children, that she is fitly enough brought in here in the room of the tender mothers who wept for the loss of theirs; and the rather, because the slaughter of the Bethlehemites might be called <sup>2</sup> that of her children, because among them <sup>3</sup> was the place of her sepulchre; after that she had lost her life in the bitter pangs of child-birth.

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Ann Dom  
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from the  
beginning  
of the Go-  
spels to  
Math ii.  
8 Mark ii.  
23. Luke  
vi. 1.

There is no prophet, we own, wherein it is expressly said, that the Messiah should be called a *Nazarene*; <sup>1</sup> but the observation of St Jerom, in his comment upon this place, is not amiss, viz. that when St Matthew <sup>m</sup> mentions the word *prophets* in the plural number, (whereas, in other places, he had always cited some particular prophet,) he thereby shews, that he did not take the words from the prophets, but only the sense. Since then the title of *Nazarene*, both Jews and other enemies of Christianity have always, by way of contempt, given to our blessed Saviour, because he was supposed to come out of that very city; from whence it was thought impossible, that <sup>a</sup> any good thing should come; and since most of the prophets speak of Christ, as a person that was to be reputed vile and abject, <sup>o</sup> a stranger to his brethren, and even an alien to his mother's sons, <sup>p</sup> despised and rejected of men, despised and esteemed not, here is the plain sense of the words, *he shall be a Nazarene*, <sup>q</sup> and the angel, by God's appointment, no doubt, sent him to this contemptible place, that he might thence have a name of infamy and contempt put upon him, according to the frequent intimation by the prophets.

And Matth.  
ii. 23. ex-  
plained and  
vindicated,

<sup>r</sup> The word we render *wise men*, in its original, signifies *magicians*; which, however, now it bespeaks not so good a character, was, nevertheless, heretofore a name of very innocent and honourable signification. The studious and inquisitive, whose business and profession led them to search into nature, its most abstruse causes and effects, and more

Who these  
wise men  
were.

Z z 2

par-

<sup>i</sup> Gen. xxx. 1.    <sup>k</sup> Ibid. xxxv. 19.    <sup>l</sup> Bishop Kidder's Demonstration of the Messiah, part 2. c. 3.    <sup>m</sup> Chap. ii. 23.  
<sup>n</sup> John i. 46.    <sup>o</sup> Psal. lxxix. 8.    <sup>p</sup> Isaiah liii. 3.    <sup>q</sup> Whitby's Annotations in locum.    <sup>r</sup> Stanhope on the epistles and gospels, vol. 1.

A. M.  
4034, &c.  
Ann Dom  
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from the  
beginning  
of the Go-  
spels to  
Matth. ix.  
8. Mark ii.  
23. Luke  
vi. 1.

particularly into the motions and dispositions of heavenly bodies, were distinguished by this title: And in what profound veneration and respect they were held, appears from the most important matters, both sacred and civil, being committed to their administration. They were the counsellors, the judges, the priests, the princes, in a word, the oracles of the eastern countries. But, as the best arts are sometimes perverted to ill purposes; so it happened to these, that, falling into the hands of bad men, who met with people ignorant and credulous, and not only easy, but even glad, to be deluded, they degenerated into the cheats of judiciary astrology; and these abuses grew so general, as, at last, to fix an ill sense upon the word, and a scandal on the science itself.

It were a wrong and great indignity to the persons now before us, not to believe them of the nobler and better sort; but we can hardly be persuaded (though some would endeavour to do it) that they were persons of royal dignity, \* because we cannot reasonably suppose, that the evangelist would have omitted a circumstance of so great moment, both for their honour and our Lord's. We can hardly think; but that some account would have been given of their royal train and equipage, and that all Jerusalem would have been moved as much to see their entry, as they were to hear their questions: Nor can we imagine, that it would have been decent in Herod to have received them with no more respect; to have dismissed them to Bethlehem without attendants; much less to have laid his commands upon them to return back, and bring him an account of the child, as soon as they had found him, had they been persons of equal rank and dignity with himself. Upon these considerations we may justly deny them the title of *kings*, though we cannot but allow them to be persons of great wisdom, learning, and integrity; of which ours, and some other translations of the Bible, have been so sensible, as very prudently to decline the odious name of *magicians*, and to call them *the wise men of the east*; but what part of the east it was that they came from, few interpreters have agreed.

Whence  
they came

Some have imagined, that these travellers came out of Persia; others from Chaldea, others from Arabia, and others again from Mesopotamia. All these countries lay

\* Whicby's Annotations on Matth. ii. 1. &c.  
hope on the epistles and gospels, vol. I.

\* Stan-

lay eastward from Jerusalem and the Holy Land; and in each of these, some antecedent notions of the Messiah may be accounted for. In Chaldea and Persia, by the captivity of the Jews, and the books of Daniel; in Arabia, by the nearness of their neighbourhood, and frequent commerce; and in Mesopotamia, besides these common helps, they had the prophecy of their countryman Balaam, concerning a star <sup>u</sup> that should come out of Jacob to direct them. \* But as we know of no record, wherein this prophecy was preserved, but the book of Moses, which the people of Mesopotamia neither read nor believed, so it seems evident, that Balaam's words do not refer to a star that should arise at any prince's birth, but to a certain king, who should be as glorious and splendid in his dominions, as the stars are in the firmament. Upon the whole therefore, it seems most likely, that these wise men came out of Arabia, <sup>v</sup> (which, according to Tacitus, was the bound of Judea eastward,) not only because the gifts which they presented were the natural products of that country, which was famous likewise for its magi, insomuch, that Pythagoras (as Porphyry informs us) went into Arabia to acquire wisdom; but because its neighbourhood to Judea might give these wise men the advantage of discerning the star better than any more distant nation had.

A. M.  
4034, &c.  
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from the  
beginning  
of the Go-  
spels to  
Math. ix.  
8. Mark ii.  
13. Luke  
vi. 1.



For, that this star was no celestial one, and such as might be seen at a vast distance, its motion, contrary to the ordinary course of stars, its performing the part of a guide to the travellers, and that by day, very probably, as well as night, its accommodating itself to their necessities, and disappearing and returning, as they could best, or least be without it; and (what is a circumstance as remarkable as any) its pointing out, and standing over the very place where the child was, (which the height and distance of common stars makes it impossible for them to do,) are a sufficient demonstration. It seems not improbable, therefore, that what the evangelist calls a star, was only that glorious light <sup>z</sup> that shone upon the Bethlehem shepherds, when the angel came to impart unto them the tidings of our Saviour's birth; for that this light was exceeding great, is clear from that expression, which styles it the <sup>a</sup> *glory of the Lord*, and that it was a light from heaven

What the  
star that  
conducted  
them was

<sup>u</sup> Numb. xxiv. 17.    <sup>z</sup> Whitby's Annotations    <sup>v</sup> Ibid.  
<sup>a</sup> Ibid.    <sup>a</sup> Luke ii. 9.



A. M. 4034, &c.  
Ann Dom 35, &c.  
from the beginning of the Gospels to  
Matth ix. 8. Mark ii. 23. Luke vi. 1.

ven hanging over their heads, the words in the <sup>b</sup> Greek, as well as <sup>c</sup> Latin version, sufficiently inform us.

Now, every one knows, that such a light, at a great distance, appears like a star; or at least, after it had thus shone about the shepherds, it might be lifted up on high, and then formed into the likeness of a star, where standing vertically over Judea for some time, it might direct the Arabian astrologers (whom so strange a phænomenon could hardly escape) to the capital city, as the likeliest place to gain intelligence of the new-born king, whose *star they had seen in the east*, i. e. from the place of their abode, which was in the east: For, should we suppose that this light was placed in any part of the eastern hemisphere, it would have denoted something extraordinary among the Indians, or eastern nations, rather than among the people of the Jews.

How the wise men came to understand what the star meant.

<sup>d</sup> But how came these eastern sages to know this star, or luminous appearance in the heavens, (place it where we will,) denoted the birth of a king? Now, for the resolution of this question, it must be observed, what <sup>e</sup> some Heathen historians tell us, *viz.* 'That through the whole east it was expected, that about this time a king was to arise out of Judea, who should rule over all the world.' Nor could it well be otherwise, since, from the time of the Babylonish captivity, we find the Jews dispersed <sup>f</sup> through all the provinces of the Persian monarchy, and that <sup>g</sup> in great numbers, and <sup>h</sup> many people of the land becoming Jews; and, after their return home, increasing so mightily, that they were dispersed through Africa, Asia, and many cities and islands of Europe, and (as Josephus <sup>i</sup> tells us) wherever they dwelt, making many proselytes to their religion. <sup>k</sup> Now these wise men, living so near to Judea, the seat of this prophecy, and conversing with Jews, i. e. with those, who every where expected the completion of it at that time, as soon as they came to see this extraordinary star, or body of light, hovering over Judea, they might rationally conjecture, that it signified the completion of that celebrated prophecy, concerning the king of Jewry, over the centre of which land, they, being then in the east, might see this meteor hang.

<sup>b</sup> Περιλαμψεν αὐτους. <sup>c</sup> Emicuit ex alto. <sup>d</sup> Whitby's Annotations. <sup>e</sup> Tacit Hist. et lib. 5.; Suet. De vita Vesp. c. 4. <sup>f</sup> Esther iii. 8. <sup>g</sup> Ibid. chap. ix. 2. <sup>h</sup> Ibid. chap. iii. 13. <sup>i</sup> Antiq. lib. 14. c. 12. <sup>k</sup> Whitby's Annotations.

Not long after the departure of these eastern sages from Bethlehem, we find a prodigious multitude of innocent babes inhumanly put to death, upon the account of him whom these wise men came to adore. But, to vindicate the justice and goodness of providence in this proceeding, we need not appeal to God's universal dominion over all his creatures, and the right he has to take away, in what manner he pleases, the being which he gives us; we need only consider the present life, not as our last and final state, but as one whose principal tendency is to another; and then it will appear, that there is no certain measure to be taken of the divine justice or goodness, towards us, without taking in the distributions of that other life, which, indeed, is the main end of our living at all. What Solomon, therefore, in his Wisdom, says of the righteous in general, is much more verified in the case of these harmless babes: <sup>1</sup> *In the sight of the unwise, they seemed to die, and their departure is taken for misery; but they are in peace: For, though they were punished in the sight of men, yet is their hope full of immortality.* <sup>m</sup> For a frail, a short, a troublesome, a dangerous life, God gives them the recompence of an immortal, a securely happy, a completely glorious one; which not only vindicates, but magnifies his goodness and liberality to them. He considers their infancy, and the noble fruit which might have sprung from these tender plants, had they been allowed to grow to full maturity, and accordingly rewards them: For, though they wanted the will of martyrdom, which riper years may have, yet it must be allowed, that they were clear of that voluntary and actual sin which those riper years would have contracted: And therefore, as in the most literal sense, <sup>n</sup> they were not defiled with sensual pleasures, but left the world in virgin-innocence, as they were truly redeemed from among men, whose early translation to a state of bliss prevented the hazards and temptations of a wicked world; and, as they were (strictly speaking) the first fruits unto God and the Lamb, who began to shed their blood in the cause of a new born Saviour, so God hath been pleased to vouchsafe them a peculiar honour, <sup>o</sup> *to sing as it were, a new song before the throne, and to follow the Lamb whitherso-*  
*ever*

A. M.  
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8. Mark ii.  
23. Luke  
vi. 1.  
The Beth-  
lehem mas-  
sacre no re-  
flection on  
providence.

<sup>1</sup> Wisdom iii. 2, &c.  
gospels, vol. 1.

<sup>m</sup> Stanhope on the epistles and  
<sup>n</sup> Rev. xiv. 4. <sup>o</sup> Ibid. ver. 3, 4, 5.

A. M.  
4034, &c.  
Ann Dom  
30, &c  
from the  
beginning  
of the Gō  
spels to  
Matth. ix.  
8. Mark ii.  
23. Luke  
vi. 1.

Our Lord's  
discovery of  
himself to  
the Sama-  
ritan wo-  
man ac-  
counted for

*ever he goeth, because in their mouth was found no guile; for they were without fault before the throne of God.*

We have but one objection more to answer, and that is a seeming inconsistency in our Saviour, in discovering to the Samaritan woman his divine character, which he had so often desired his disciples to conceal. Our Saviour, it is true, was so far from making any unnecessary declarations of himself, that, both upon <sup>p</sup> St Peter's confessing him to be the Christ, and <sup>q</sup> after his transfiguration, wherein he was delared to be the Son of God, we find him charging his disciples to say nothing of this, until his resurrection; <sup>r</sup> because their testimony, in these points, might not only be like a matter concerted between him and them, but because indeed they were not qualified to be his witnesses in these things, until they had received power from on high, by the coming down of the Holy Ghost. It is to be observed however, that, when our Lord is himself fairly called upon, and especially by persons invested with authority, he never once conceals his divine nature and commission.

When <sup>s</sup> the Jews came round him in Solomon's porch, and said unto him, *How long dost thou make us doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly;* his answer is express, *I told you, and ye believed not: The works, that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me; for I and my Father are one.* When he stood before the judgment-seat, and the high-priest demanded of him, <sup>t</sup> *I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us, whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God;* his answer is, *Thou hast said;* or, (as St Mark <sup>u</sup> expresses it) *I am;* and ye shall see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven. Nay, there are some instances, wherein, of his own accord, and without any provocation of this kind, he freely discovers who he was; for, having cured the man that was born blind, and afterwards meeting him accidentally, <sup>x</sup> *Dost thou believe on the Son of God?* says he. Whereupon the man asking, *Who is the Son of God, that I may believe on him?* Our Saviour replies, *Thou hast both seen him, and it is he who talketh with thee:* And therefore we need less wonder, that, when this Samaritan woman had first of

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<sup>p</sup> Mark viii. 29.    <sup>q</sup> Matth. xvii. 9.    <sup>r</sup> Whitby's Annotations on Matthew ix 30.    <sup>s</sup> John x. 25. &c.    <sup>t</sup> Matth. xxvi. 63, 64.    <sup>u</sup> Chap. xiv. 62.    <sup>x</sup> John ix. 35. &c.



all confessed him to be a prophet, and, (as her words seem to imply) <sup>y</sup> was a little dubious, whether he was not the Messiah, our Saviour should prevent her enquiry, and tell her voluntarily that he was. Especially considering, that <sup>z</sup> such a declaration might be a means to prepare her, and the rest of the Samaritans, whenever his apostles should come and preach the gospel unto them, to receive their testimony, as we find (by the history of the apostolic acts) that they did it with great gladness.

Thus have we endeavoured to satisfy all the exceptions of any weight, that the lovers of infidelity have hitherto made to this part of the evangelical history; and, if Christianity stood in need either of the support or testimony of Heathen authors, we might say, that the incarnation of Christ, the Son of God, is no more than <sup>a</sup> what the Greeks (as Julian avers) affirm both of Æsculapius and Pythagoras, viz. that they were both the sons of Jupiter, though they appeared in human nature, which doctrine (in the evangelist St. John) Amelius \*, the master of Porphyry, allows to be true: That the birth of our Blessed Jesus of a virgin immaculate is no more than <sup>b</sup> what the ancient Jewish doctors expected in their Messiah; and therefore Simon Magus, who greatly affected that character, pretended that his mother Rachel bore him without the loss of her virginity: That the new star, or body of light, which, upon our Saviour's birth, conducted the wise men to him, <sup>c</sup> is acknowledged by Julian, though he would

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<sup>y</sup> Ibid. chap. iv. 25.      <sup>z</sup> Whitby, in locum.      <sup>a</sup> Huetii  
Quæst. Alnet. lib. 2. c. 13.

\* This Platonist, upon reading the beginning of St John's gospel, swore by Jupiter. ' That the Barbarian (as he called him) had hit upon the right notion, when he affirmed, that the Word, which made all things, was in the beginning, in place of prime dignity and authority with God, and was that God who created all things, and in whom every thing that was made, had, according to its nature, its life and being; that he was incarnate, and clothed with a body wherein he manifested the glory and magnificence of his nature: and that after his death, he returned to the repossession of his divinity, and became the same God which he was before his assuming a body, and taking the human nature and flesh upon him;' *Euseb. Præp. 9. evang. lib. 11.*

<sup>b</sup> Huetii Quæst. Alnet. lib. 2. c. 15.      <sup>c</sup> Ibid. Demonst. prop. 3.

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gladly ascribe it to natural causes; is set off with great eloquence by Chalcidius \*, in his comment upon Plato's Timæus; and perhaps might be that very phenomenon †, which Pliny <sup>d</sup> describes under the name of a comet: That our Lord's forerunner, John the Baptist, was such a person as the gospel represents him, viz. an exhorter of the Jews, to the love and practice of virtue, and to regeneration by baptism and newness of life, we have an ample testimony in Josephus: <sup>e</sup> That our Lord himself was certainly a prophet, Phlegon †, who was the emperor Adrian's freed man, acknowledges, and, in his history, has related several events which he foretold; that he was <sup>f</sup> a great worker of miracles, the authors of the Talmud own; nor can Celsus and Julian, his bitterest enemies, deny it, only they would gladly impute them to a wrong cause, his great skill in magical incantations: That human bodies were frequently possessed with devils, who afflicted them with grievous and tormenting diseases, is the joint confession

\* In his relation of some portentous significations of stars, he adds: 'Est quoque alia venerabilior et sanctior historia, quæ perhibet ortu stellæ cujusdam insolitæ, non morbus mortisque prænunciatas, sed descensum Dei venerabilis, ad humanæ servationis rerumque mortalium gratiam, quam a Chaldeis observatum fuisse testantur, qui Deum nuper natum muneribus venerati sunt;' *Hammond's Annotations on Matth. ii. 2.*

† The words of Huetius concerning this matter are these, — 'Scribit Plinius exortum fuisse aliquando cometam candidum, argenteo crine its fulgentem, ut vix contueri posset quisquam, specieque humana Dei effigiem in se ostendentem;' *Quæst. Alnet. lib. 2. c. 16.*

<sup>d</sup> Lib. 2. c. 25. <sup>e</sup> *Antiq. lib. 18. c. 7.*

‡ He composed an history, digested by Olympiads, as far as the year of Christ 140. In his history he takes notice, that, in the Olympiad, which determines about the middle of the 33d year of the common æra, there happened the greatest eclipse of the sun that ever had been seen, insomuch, that the stars were visible at noon-day, and that afterwards there was a great earthquake in Bithynia. Several critics believe, that this was the darkness which happened at the death of Jesus Christ, which is a matter we shall have occasion to enquire into, when we come to that part of his history.

<sup>f</sup> *Huetii Demonf. prop. 3.*

cession both of <sup>s</sup> Jamblicus, and Minutius Fœlix \*; and that our Blessed Lord had the power of curing these, <sup>h 4034 &c.</sup> and of destroying the dominion of evil spirits, wherever he came, is the great complaint of Prophyry, who makes it no wonder that their cities should be wasted with plagues, since Æsculapius, and the rest of the gods, ever since the admission of the Christian religion, were either become useleſs or fled. So prevalent is the force of truth, that it ſeldom fails to draw confeſſions from thoſe who leaſt of all intend them.

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## DISSERTATION I.

### *Of the Four Evangelists, and their Writings.*

**B**EFORE we proceed any farther in the hiſtory of our Bleſſed Saviour's life, it may not be amiſs to give ſome ſhort account of the four evangeliſts that have recorded it. I call them four, becauſe whatever ſpurious pieces gained credit in the world afterwards, the tradition of the church from the beginning of the ſecond century makes it evident, that the goſpels then received were only the four goſpels which we now own.

St Matthew, who ſtands in the front of theſe evangeliſts, and is generally allowed to be the firſt who committed the goſpel to writing, was the ſon of Alpheus, a Galilean by birth, a Jew by religion, and a publican by profeſſion. Among the Jews, as well as other nations, the cuſtom at this time prevailed of having more names than one; and therefore we find his brother evangeliſt, St Mark <sup>i</sup> and Luke, <sup>k</sup> giving him the name of Levi, with a civil intent to avoid all mention of his former not ſo reputable profeſſion, before he was called to the apoſtleſhip; but (what is no leſs an inſtance of his own modeſty) in the goſpel written by himſelf, he not only takes the name by which he was moſt commonly known, but generally adds the odious epithet to it of

St Mat-  
thew's life.

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Matthew

<sup>s</sup> De Myſter. ſect. 2. c. 6.

\* The words of Minutius are worth obſerving,—‘Impuri ſpiritus vitam turbant, ſomnos inquietant, irrepunt etiam corporibus occulte, ut ſpiritus tenues; morbos ſingunt, terrent mentes, membra diſtorquent, et ad cultum ſui cogunt.’ In Oſtavo.

<sup>h</sup> Huetii Demonſt. Prop. 3. <sup>i</sup> Chap. ii. 14. <sup>k</sup> Chap. v. 27.



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*Matthew the publican*; intending thereby, no doubt, to magnify the grace of God, and the condescension of our Blessed Saviour, who did not disdain to take into the highest dignity of the Christian church, those whom the world rejected, and accounted vile.

<sup>1</sup> Whether he was born in Nazareth or no, it is certain, that his ordinary abode was at Capernaum, <sup>m</sup> because his proper business was to gather the customs on goods that came by the sea of Galilee, and the tribute which passengers were to pay that went by water; for which purpose there was a custom-house by the sea-side, where Matthew had his office, or toll-booth, their sitting at the receipt of custom. Our Lord having lately cured a famous paralytic, retired out of the town, to walk by the sea-side, where he taught the people that flocked after him; and having espied Matthew in his office, he asked him to become one of his disciples; whereupon, without any manner of hesitation, without staying so much as to settle his accounts, and put his affairs in order, *he left all and followed him.*

We cannot but suppose, that as he lived in Capernaum, the place of our Lord's usual residence, and where his sermons and miracles were so frequent, he must have been acquainted with his person and doctrine before this time; and consequently in a good preparation to receive the call with gladness. And that he did so, a good evidence it seems to be, his entertaining our Lord and his disciples at dinner next day in his house; whether he invited several of his own profession, in hopes, no doubt, that our Saviour's company and converse might make the like impression upon them.

From his election to the apostolate, he continued constantly with our Lord, during his abode upon earth; and, after his ascension, for the space of eight years, preached the gospel in several parts of Judea: But being now to betake himself to the conversion of the Gentiles, he was intreated by the Jews, who had been converted to the Christian faith, to commit to writing the history of our Lord's life and actions, and to leave it among them as a standing record of what he had preached to them; which accordingly

<sup>1</sup> Kirssin, in vita 4 evang. says he was, part 22. <sup>m</sup> Cave's Lives of the apostles.

accordingly he did, and so composed the gospel which we have now under his name.

<sup>a</sup> The countries in which he preached were chiefly Parthia † and Æthiopia, in the latter of which he converted multitudes, settled churches, and ordained ministers to confirm and build them up; and having signalized his zeal in the ministry of the gospel, and his contempt of the world in a life ‡ of most exemplary abstinence, he is, most probably, thought to have suffered martyrdom at Nadabar, a city in Æthiopia; but of the time and manner of his death, no certain account is transmitted to us.

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At the request of the Jewish converts, (as we said,) and, as some add, at the command of the rest of the apostles, St Matthew wrote his gospel, about eight or nine years after our Lord's resurrection: For that it was extant before the dispersion of the apostles, is plain from Bartholomew carrying it with him into India, where (as Eusebius ° informs us) it was found by Panætus, when he went to propagate the faith in those parts, and by such as retained the knowledge of Christ, was reputed a valuable treasure.

¶ As it was primarily designed for the benefit of the Jewish converts ¶, whatever some moderns may say to the con-

<sup>a</sup> Cave's Lives of the apostles.

† As for what is related by Nicephorus, of his going into the country of the Cannibals, and constituting Plato, one of his followers, bishop of Myrmene; of Christ's appearing to him in the form of a beautiful youth, and giving him a wand, which he pitching into the ground, it immediately grew up into a tree of his strange converting the prince of that country; of his numerous miracles, peaceable death, and sumptuous funeral, with abundance more of the like nature, they are justly to be reckoned among those fabulous reports that have no ground either of truth or probability to support them; *Cave's Lives of the apostles.*

‡ Clemens Alexandrinus tells us, that he abstained from the eating of flesh and that the chief of his diet was herbs, roots, seeds, and berries; *Pædag. lib. 2. c. 1.*

° Hist. eccl. lib 5. c. 10.

¶ Those who maintain that St Matthew wrote in Greek, produce these arguments for their opinion. 1st, That some of the fathers (such as Origen, Epiphanius, and St Jerom) quote indeed the Hebrew of St Matthew, but quote it as a book of no great authority, which they would not have done, had it been the true original. 2d, That had St Matthew wrote in Hebrew, the Hebrew names in his gospel would not have been interpreted into Greek, nor would he have quoted the Old

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Luke vi. 1.

contrary, the voice \* of all antiquity must carry it against them, that it was originally wrote in Hebrew, not in the ancient pure Hebrew, (for that, in a great measure, was lost among the vulgar,) but in a language commonly used at that time by the Jews of Palestine, (and therefore still called

Testament, according to the Septuagint translation. 3d, That the Greek language was then very common in Palestine, and all the east. And, 4th, since all the other authors of the New Testament wrote in Greek, why should St Matthew alone write his gospel in Hebrew; But, to these arguments it may be replied, 1st, That the uniform testimony of all the ancients, who tell us that St Matthew wrote his gospel in Hebrew, is certainly of very great weight; but then, we must know, that there were two of these copies of St Matthew. the one pure and uncorrupted, of which they have spoken with great esteem, the other depraved by heretics, which they have contemned, and looked upon as apocryphal. 2d, The Hebrew names, interpreted into Greek, prove the very contrary to what would be inferred from it; for this demonstrates that the translation was Greek, and the original Hebrew. 3d, Of the ten passages in the Old Testament, that St Matthew cites in his gospel, there are seven of them which resemble the Hebrew more than the Septuagint; in the other three the Septuagint and the Hebrew themselves agree. but the plain truth is, that St Matthew quotes by memory, and relates, not so much the words, as the sense, of the passages. 4th, However common the Greek tongue might be in Palestine among the better sort of people, yet it is certain that the generality of the Jews spoke commonly what they called *Hebrew*, which was Syriac and Chaldee mixed with Hebrew. And, 5th, Though all the rest of the New Testament were written in Greek, yet that is no argument why this part of it should; though, if convenience were considered, it should rather, one would think, be adapted to the general use and capacity of those for whom it was wrote. The dispute, however, is about matter of fact, and this is a fact attested by all the ancients, many of whom had seen the original, and were capable of making a judgment of it; *Whitby's Prefatory discourse to the four evangelists*; and *Calmet's Dictionary*, under the word *Matthew*.

\* All the ancients, with one consent, assure us, that St Matthew wrote in Hebrew. Papias, Irenæus, Origen, Eusebius, St Cyril of Jerusalem, Epiphanius, St Jerom, St Austin, St Chrysostom, the author of the Latin Commentary on St Mark, which is ascribed to St Chrysostom, the author of the Synopsis of the Scripture, which bears the name of *Athanasius* are a cloud of witnesses who depose this; and therefore strange it is, that any should



called the *Hebrew tongue*, because wrote in Hebrew characters,) which was the Syriac, with a mixture of Hebrew and Chaldee.

This gospel of St Matthew was, for a long time, in use among the Jews, who had been converted to Christianity, and when, some time before the Romans laid siege to Jerusalem, they retired to Pella, they carried it thither along with them; from whence it was diffused into Decapolis, and all the countries beyond Jordan, where the Judaizing Christians still made use of it in the time of Epiphanius<sup>p</sup> and Eusebius<sup>q</sup> of Cæsarea. But these Christians<sup>r</sup> did not preserve this sacred *depositum* with all the fidelity they should have done. They added to it several things, which perhaps they might have heard from the mouths of the apostles, or from their immediate disciples, and this in time brought it under the suspicion of other believers. The Ebionites, at length, got it into their hands, and by their additions and defalcations, in favour of some errors they had fallen into concerning the divinity of our Saviour and the virginity of the Blessed Mother, so corrupted it, that, at length, it was given up by other churches which adhered to the form of sound doctrine. It continued, however, a long time in its primitive purity in the hands of the Nazarenes, or first believers in Palestine, who (though they were zealous in the observation of the law) embraced no such opinions as the Ebionites did, nor made any alterations in the gospel. But after the extinction of this sect, we hear no more of the genuine gospel of St Matthew, because the ancient Greek version, which, in the apostolic times, was made from it, having always preserved its primitive integrity, did, long before this, universally prevail, and was looked upon as authentic as the original; for, though its author be uncertain, yet every one who mentions it, always ascribes it to some one apostle or other.

When

should question its being originally written in that language, when the thing is so universally and uncontrollably asserted by all antiquity, not one, that I know, of, after the strictest inquiry I could make, dissenting in this matter; and who certainly had far greater opportunities of being satisfied in these things than we can have at so great a distance; *Du Pin's History of the canon*, vol. 2. c. 2.; and *Cave's Lives of the apostles*.

<sup>p</sup> Epiphanius, *Hæres.* 29. c. 7.      <sup>q</sup> Hist. eccl. lib. 3. c. 25.  
<sup>r</sup> Calmet's Dictionary, and Preface to St Matthew's gospel.

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When St Matthew began to write, the great question among the Jews was, Whether our Blessed Saviour was the true Messiah or no? and the main tendency of his gospel seems to prove this. For he shews, by his mighty deeds, that he was the Christ, the Son of God; that his mother Mary was a virgin; that he was not come to destroy the law, but to fulfil it; and that his miracles were not magical operations, nor the effects of any human art, but incontestible proofs of the power of God, and of his divine mission. \* St Ambrose observes, that none of the apostles have entered so far into the particulars of our Saviour's actions \*, as has St Matthew; that none of them have related the history of the wise men coming from the east, or the parable of the wise and foolish virgins, and some others, but he; that, in short, he has given us more rules for the conduct of life, and more lessons of morality, suitable to our necessities, than any; and all this † in a natural and easy style, (though sometimes mixed with Hebraisms,) such as becomes an historian, and especially a sacred historian, whose narration should be free from affectation, and all such trifling ornaments as do not agree with the gravity and dignity of his subject.

St Mark's  
life.

Though the name of *Mark* seems to be of Roman extraction, yet the evangelist now before us was born of Jewish parents, and originally descended from the tribe of Levi. What his proper name was, or upon what change or accident of life he might assume this, we have no manner of intelligence; but as it was no unusual thing for the Jews, when they went into the European provinces of the Roman empire, to conform to the customs of the country,

\* Ambros. Pref. in Luc. † Beaufobre's Preface sur St Matthieu.

\* If we compare St Matthew with the three other evangelists, we may perceive a remarkable difference in the order and succession of our Saviour's actions, and from chap. iv. 22. to chap. xiv. 13. which has much perplexed chronologers and interpreters. Some pretend that St Matthew should be followed, but others think it more reasonable to submit to the authority of the other three, especially since St Mark, who follows him close enough in every other thing, forsakes him in this particular. However this be, it can prove no prejudice to the truth of facts, which are the essential part of the gospel; and as to the order of time, the sacred authors are not always solicitous to follow it exactly; *Calmet's Dictionary* under the word *Matthew*.

country, and while they continued there, to be called by some name of common use; so some have conjectured, that when Mark attended upon St Peter to Rome, he might at that time take upon him this name, which (as he never returned to Judea to re-assume his own) he for ever retained. In the writings of the apostles we read of several called by this name. There is John <sup>u</sup>, whose surname was Mark <sup>x</sup>; Mark, the sister's son of Barnabas; Mark, <sup>y</sup> who was employed in the ministry; Mark, whom St Paul calls his fellow-labourer <sup>z</sup>; and Mark, whom St Peter <sup>a</sup> styles his son: But which of these was the evangelist, or whether the evangelist might not be a person distinct from each of these, has been a matter of some doubt among the learned.

That he was one of the seventy disciples, and among them one of those who took offence at our Lord's discourse of <sup>b</sup> *eating his flesh and drinking his blood*, some of the ancients have affirmed; but Eusebius <sup>c</sup>, from Papias who was bishop of Hierapolis, and lived near those times, tells us positively that he was no hearer or follower of our Saviour. He was converted by some of the apostles, and most likely by St Peter, to whom he was a constant retainer, and served him in the capacity of an amanuensis, and an interpreter. <sup>d</sup> For though the apostles were divinely inspired, and, among other miraculous powers, had the gift of languages conferred on them; yet the interpretation of tongues seems to be a gift more peculiar to some than others; and it might be St Mark's talent, either by word or writing, to expound St Peter's discourses to those who understood not the language wherein they were delivered.

He accompanied St Peter in all his travels, preached Christianity in Italy, and at Rome, and at the request of the Christians in those parts, composed his gospel, which St Peter afterwards revised and approved. From Italy he went into Egypt, and having fixed his chief residence in Alexandria, he there, and in the country round about, propagated the Christian faith with such success, that multitudes of both men and women, not only became converts, but engaged themselves likewise in a more strict

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<sup>u</sup> Acts xii. 12.<sup>x</sup> Col. iv. 10.<sup>y</sup> 2 Tim. iv. 11.<sup>z</sup> Philemon, ver. 24.<sup>a</sup> 1 Pet. v. 13.<sup>b</sup> John vi. 60.<sup>c</sup> Hist. eccl. lib. 3. c. 39.<sup>d</sup> Cave's Lives of the apostles.

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profession \* of the religion that he taught them than ordinary.

From Alexandria he removed westward; and passing through the countries of Marmarica, Pentapolis, and some others in his way to Libya, (though the people were barbarous in their manners, as well as idolatrous in their worship,) by his preaching and miracles, he not only converted, but, before he departed, confirmed them in the profession of the gospel. Upon his return to Alexandria, he preached with all boldness, ordered and disposed of the affairs of the church, and wisely provided for the continuance thereof, by constituting governors and pastors in it. <sup>c</sup> The great number of miracles which he wrought, and the reproaches which some of the converts made upon the senseless idols of the Egyptians, so exasperated their rage, that they were resolved to destroy this introducer of a new religion among them. It was at the time of Easter when the great solemnities of their god Serapis happened to be celebrated; at which festival the minds of the people being excited to a passionate vindication of the honour of their idol, they broke in upon St Mark, then engaged in the solemn celebration of divine worship, and binding his feet, they dragged him through the streets, and other rugged places, to a precipice near the sea; but, for that night, they thrust him into a dark prison, where his soul, by a divine vision, was strengthened and encouraged under

\* Philo, in his *Treatise of a contemplative life*, gives us a long account, and high commendation, of a set of people, (whom he calls *Θεραπευται*, who, in a pleasant place near the Maræotic lake in Egypt, formed themselves into religious societies, and lived a strict philosophic life, and these Eusebius (Hist. eccl. lib. 2 c. 16.) affirms to have been Christians, converted and brought under these admirable rules by St Mark, at his coming into Egypt: But whoever seriously considers Philo's account, will plainly find, that he intends it of Jews, and professors of the Mosaic religion, and not of Christians; partly because it is improbable that Philo, being a Jew, should give so great a character and commendation of Christians, who were so hateful to the Jews at that time in all places of the world; partly because Philo speaks of them as an institution of a considerable standing, whereas Christians had but lately appeared in the world, and were later come into Egypt; and partly because many things in Philo's account do no way suit with the state and manners of Christians at that time; *Cave's Life of St Mark.*

<sup>c</sup> Cave's Lives of the apostles.

under the ruins of a shattered body. Early next morning the tragedy began again. For, in the same manner as they had done the day before, they dragged him about, till, his flesh being raked off, and his veins emptied of blood, his spirits failed, and he expired: But their malice died not with him; for taking the poor remains of his body, they threw them into a fire, and so burnt them; but his bones and ashes the Christians gathered up, and decently intombed near the place where he usually preached.

<sup>f</sup> After the defeat of Simon Magus, (whereof we shall have occasion to say more hereafter,) the reputation of the Christian religion grew so great, and converts at Rome became so many, that they were desirous to have in writings those doctrines which had hitherto been imparted to them by word of mouth only. St Mark, to whom this request was made, accordingly set himself to recollect what he, by long conversation, had learned from St Peter, who (when the other had finished the work) perused, approved, and recommended it to the use of the churches: And for this reason it is, by some of the ancients, styled St Peter's gospel; not that St Peter dictated it to St Mark, but because St Mark did chiefly compose it out of that account which St Peter usually delivered in his discourses to the people: And accordingly St Chrysostom <sup>g</sup> observes, that the evangelist, in his nervous style and manner of expression, takes a great delight to imitate St Peter.

\* This gospel indeed was principally designed for the use of the Christians at Rome, and from hence some may

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be

<sup>f</sup> Stanhope on the epistles and gospels, vol. 4. <sup>g</sup> Hom. 3. in Matt

\* The original Greek copy, under St Mark's own hand, is said to be extant at Venice at this day, written (as they tell us) by him at Aquileia, and thence, after many hundred years, translated to Venice, where it is still preserved, though the letters are so worn out with length of time, that they are not capable of being read. There are likewise some Greek manuscripts, wherein the twelve last verses of this gospel are omitted: but they are extant in the greatest number of the most ancient and authentic copies, as well as in the works of Irenæus an author of prior date to any of the manuscripts that want them. It is not to be questioned therefore, but that they originally belonged to St. Mark's gospel, and were suppressed by some ignorant or conceited transcriber, upon the account of some seeming contradictions between St Matthew and this other

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23. Luke  
vi. 1.

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8. Mark ii.  
23. Luke  
vi. 1.

be apt to think it highly congruous, that it should at first be written in the Latin tongue: But it must be considered; <sup>h</sup> that as the Jewish converts, in that city, understood but little Latin, so there were very few Romans that did not understand Greek, which (as appears from the writers of that age) was the genteel and fashionable language of those times; nor can any good reason be assigned, why it should be more inconvenient for St Mark to write his gospel in Greek for the use of the Romans, than that St Paul should, in the same language, write his epistle to that church.

We cannot compare St Matthew and St Mark together, but must perceive, that the latter had seen the writings of the former, because he often uses the same terms, relates the same facts, and takes notice of the same circumstances; but we must not therefore infer, that all he intended in his work was simply to abridge him: <sup>i</sup> Because he begins his gospel in a different manner; he omits several things, particularly our Lord's genealogy; he varies from him in the order of the narration; he relates some facts that the other has omitted; he enlarges upon others in many particulars, and (what is no mean argument of his truth and impartiality in all the rest) the shameful lapse and denial of his beloved master St Peter he sets down, with more and more aggravating circumstances than any of the other evangelists have recorded.

St Luke's  
life.

St Luke, who, by some ancient authors, is called *Lucius* and *Lucanus*, was a Syrian by birth, a native of Antioch, and by profession a physician. Antioch <sup>k</sup>, the metropolis of Syria, was, at this time, a city celebrated for the pleasantness of its situation, the fertility of its soil, the riches of its traffic, the wisdom of its senate, the learning of its professors, and the civility and politeness of its inhabitants, by the pens of some of the greatest orators of their times; and yet, above all these, it was renowned for this one peculiar honour, that in this place it was, where the disciples were first named Christians.

In Antioch there were a famous university well replenished with learned professors of all arts and sciences, where

evangelist, which, with a small skill in critical learning may be easily reconciled; *Cave's Lives of the apostles*; and *Beausobre's Preface sur St Marc*.

<sup>h</sup> Cave's Lives of the apostles. <sup>i</sup> Beausobre's Preface sur St Marc. <sup>k</sup> Cave's Lives of the apostles.



where St Luke could not miss of a liberal education ; however, he did not only study in Antioch, but in all the schools of Greece and Egypt, whereby he became accomplished in every part of human literature, and, as the Greek academies were then more especially famous for the study of physick, our evangelist, for some time, applied himself solely to the practice of that ; and, after his conversion, continued, very likely, in the same profession, which was far from being inconsistent, but rather subservient to the ministry of the gospel, or the cure of souls.

As to his other accomplishment, the art of painting, the ancients knew nothing of it. Nicephorus <sup>1</sup> is the first author that mentions it ; and though a great deal of pains has been taken to prove, that some pieces still extant were drawn by his own hand, yet the ancient inscription found in a vault near St Mary's church, in the Via lata at Rome, (the place where St Paul's house is said to have stood,) where mention is made of a picture of the Blessed Virgin, as one of the seven painted by St Luke, is an argument of better authority for his skill in that art, than any that the Jesuit Gretser, in his laborious treatise, <sup>m</sup> has produced. But whether our evangelist ever painted the Blessed Virgin or not, it is certain that he has left us so many particulars (omitted by others) relating to the conception, birth and infancy of her son, <sup>n</sup> that he seems to have been acquainted with her, and to have had some share in her confidence.

That he was one of the seventy disciples, is a notion inconsistent with his own declaration, in the preface to his gospel, wherein he informs us, that the facts therein contained were communicated to him by others, who had been <sup>o</sup> eye-witnesses, and ministers of the word from the beginning ; and therefore the most probable opinion is, that as the Jews lived in great numbers, and had their synagogues, and schools of education at Antioch, St Luke was at first a Jewish proselyte, but afterwards, by St Paul, (while he abode in this city,) converted to the Christian faith. A companion of his travels and sufferings he plainly appears to have been, if not from his first conversion, at least from the time of St Paul's first going into Macedonia ;

<sup>1</sup> Lib. 2. c. 43.

Luca pict. c. 18. 19.

<sup>o</sup> Luke i. 2.

<sup>m</sup> De imagine non manu. et a St

<sup>n</sup> Grotius, in Luke ii. 51.

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Math. ix.  
8. Mark ii  
13. Luke  
vi. 1.

nia; for there, in his account of the apostles actions, he changes his style and <sup>p</sup> includes himself ever after as a party concerned in the narrative.

The truth is, he followed him in all his dangers, was with him at several arraignments at Jerusalem, and accompanied him in his desperate voyage to Rome, where he still attended on him, to serve his necessities, and supply those ministerial offices which the apostle's confinement would not suffer him to undergo. Nay, it appears from a passage of St Paul <sup>q</sup> to Timothy, that he returned with him to Rome the second time, waiting on him in the same capacity, and especially in carrying messages to those churches where they had planted Christianity: Nor can we well forbear thinking, that he continued his attendance on him until the apostle had finished his course, and crowned his ministry with his martyrdom; by which kind offices he infinitely endeared himself to St. Paul, who owned him for his fellow-labourer, and called him *the beloved physician*, <sup>r</sup> and *the brother, whose praise is in the gospel, throughout all the churches*.

After the death of St Paul, how he disposed of himself is not so certain. Some are of opinion, that he returned into the east, and in Egypt and Lydia, preached the gospel, wrought miracles, converted multitudes, and constituted guides and ministers of religion; but others rather think, that he travelled into Dalmatia, Gallia, Italy, and Macedonia, where he spared no pains, nor declined any dangers, that he might faithfully discharge the trust committed to him. <sup>s</sup> Upon his coming into Greece, those who make him die a violent death (for some are of a contrary opinion) tell us, that he preached with great success, and baptized many converts into the Christian faith, till a party of insidels, making head against him, drew him to execution, and, for want of a cross whereon to dispatch him, hanged him upon an olive-tree, in the eightieth year of his age.

His writings.

We have two pieces of his, viz. his Gospel, and the History of the apostolic acts, wrote for the use of the churches, and both dedicated to Theophilus: but who this Theophilus was, it is not so easy a matter to determine, since

<sup>p</sup> Acts xvi. 10.    <sup>q</sup> 2. Tim. iv. 11.    <sup>r</sup> 2 Cor. viii. 18.  
<sup>s</sup> Cave's Life of St Luke.

since many of the ancients themselves have taken this name in a general appellative sense, for a *lover of God*, a title common to every good Christian; but others (with better reason, have thought, that it is the proper name of some person of distinction, since the title of *most excellent* is annexed to it, which is the usual form of address to princes and great men. But who this person of distinction was, it is impossible to tell, only we may suppose, that it was some considerable magistrate, whom St Luke had converted, and to whom he now dedicated his books, not only as a testimony of honourable respect, but as a means of giving him a farther information of those things wherein he had instructed him.

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23 Luke  
vi. 1.

‘ The occasion of his writing his gospel was, (as himself intimates,) the rash and wrong accounts given to the world by some, who, either out of ignorance or design, had misrepresented the actions and doctrines of Christ, and sowed the seeds of error in the church. It is certain, that this evangelist is more circumstantial in relating the facts, and more exact in the method and order of them, than either of the two who wrote before him. ‘ The history of Zacharias, the generation of John the Baptist, the angel’s coming to the Blessed Virgin, Elizabeth’s salutation of her at the first interview, the occasion of Joseph and Mary’s going to Bethlehem, the circumstances of our Saviour’s birth there, the publication of it to the shepherds, and the testimony which Simeon and Anna gave to him in the temple; these, and several other pieces of history, as well as the parables of the lost sheep, lost piece of money, and returning prodigal son, &c. are not related by any other evangelist. His history therefore is an excellent supplement of what they have omitted; nor does it in the least detract from the authority of his relations, that he himself was not present at the doing of them: For, if we consider who were the persons from whom he derived his account of things, he had a stock of intelligence sufficiently authentic to proceed upon; and, when he had finished it, had the sanction and approbation of an apostle divinely inspired, (as himself likewise was,) even of the great apostle of the Gentiles, to confirm it.

Who-

‘ Stanhope on the epistles and gospels, vol. 4.  
Argument on St Luke.

‘ Pool’s



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Mark 2. 23.  
Luke vi. 1

Whoever looks into the beginning of St Luke's history of the apostolic acts, may easily perceive that it is a continuation of what he had related in his gospel; for it takes up the story at our Saviour's ascension, and continues it to St Paul's arrival at Rome after his appeal to Cæsar, and so, properly speaking, is but one history divided into two parts. The main difference between the gospel and the Acts is, that in the former he writes from the information he had from others, but such as were true and authentic witnesses; in the latter, from his own knowledge, and personal concern in the things he relates.

His chief design, in the composition of this work, was, to write a true history of the apostles, and of the foundation of the Christian church, in opposition to the false Acts, and false Histories, which began then to be dispersed about the world. This history, however, does not comprise the acts of all the apostles, but confines itself chiefly to the most remarkable passages of two, St Peter and St Paul, and even of these two, it gives us but a short and summary account. St Peter's story carries it down no lower than his deliverance from Herod's imprisoning him, and the death of his persecutor, which happened in the year of our Lord 44; and yet the apostle lived four and twenty years after this. And in like manner, the history of St Paul is far from being complete; for, as from the time of his conversion, there is very little said of him, to his coming to Iconium, which was twelve years after; so his story proceeds no farther than to his first coming to Rome, in the year of our Lord 58; and yet after this he lived ten years, and having preached the gospel in Spain, and other parts of the west, at last returned to Rome, and there suffered martyrdom.

\* It must be owned, however, that the evangelist is more particular in his account of St Paul, than of any other of the apostles, and that not only because he was more signally active in the cause of Christianity, but because St Luke was his constant attendant, an eye-witness of the whole carriage of his life, and privy to his most intimate transactions, and therefore capable of giving a more full and satisfactory relation of them.

The

\* Cave's Life of St Luke.

<sup>y</sup> The evangelist's design, in short, was not to compose a large volume, but only to single out some few things which he thought necessary for the instruction of the faithful; and in this respect his work may be called *An historical demonstration of the truth of the Christian religion*; since therein we perceive our Lord's promises fulfilled, in his mission of the Holy Ghost, in his resurrection, and ascension into heaven, in the sovereign power he exercises there, in the miracles he enabled his followers to work, in the rise and wonderful progress of his religion, and, in one word, in the Christian church becoming the church universal by the call to the Gentiles.

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23. Luke  
vi. 1.

We have only one thing more to remark concerning this history, *viz.* That as St Luke wrote it at Rome, and at the end of St Paul's two years imprisonment there, with which he concludes his story; so his way and manner of writing is exact and accurate; his style polite and elegant, sublime and noble, and yet easy and perspicuous, flowing with a natural grace and sweetness, admirably adapted to an historical design, and all along expressed in a vein of purer and more refined language than is to be found in the other writers of the sacred story.

St John, though the last in order, yet first in quality, among the evangelists, was by birth a Galilean, the son of Zebedee and Salome, (one of those devout women who constantly attended our Lord in his ministry,) and brother to James, who (to distinguish him from another apostle of the same name) is generally called *James the Great*. Before his adjoining himself to Christ, he seems to have been a disciple to John the Baptist, and is thought to have been that other disciple who (in the first chapter <sup>2</sup> of his gospel) is said to have been present with Andrew when John declared Jesus to be the Lamb of God, and thereupon to have followed him to the place of his abode.

He was by much the youngest of the apostles; yet was he admitted into as great a share of his master's confidence as any. He was one of those to whom he communicated the most private passages of his life; one of those whom he took with him when he went and restored Jairus's daughter to life; one of those to whom he exhibited a specimen of his divinity, in his transfiguration on the mount; one

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<sup>y</sup> Beaufobre's Pref. sur les Actes des apotres. <sup>2</sup> Ver. 35, 40.

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8. Mark ii  
23. Luke  
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of those who were present at his conference with Moses and Elias, and heard that voice which declared him the beloved Son of God ; and one of those who were companions of his solitude, and most retired devotions, and bitter agonies in the garden. Thus, of the three who were made the witnesses of their master's actions, which he saw convenient to conceal, St John had constantly the privilege to make one. Nay, even of these three he seems, in some respects, to have the preference ; to be known by the most desirable of all titles, *the disciple whom Jesus loved* ; to have the honour of † leaning upon his Lord's bosom at meat ; to have the intimacy with him to ask him a question, viz. (who in the company was the traitor ?) which even St Peter himself had not courage to do ; and (what is the highest instance of his affection) to have his mother, his sorrowful and disconsolate mother, with his last dying breath, committed to his care and comfort : <sup>a</sup> which peculiar tokens of his master's favour and esteem, some have ascribed to the apostle's eminent modesty, others to his unspotted chastity, others think it an indulgence due to his youth ; but they seem to have the brightest notion who impute it to a nearness of relation, and a peculiar sweetness of disposition conspiring to recommend him.

<sup>b</sup> Upon the division of the provinces, which the apostles made among themselves, Asia fell to St John's share, though he did not immediately enter upon his charge, but staid at Jerusalem, at least till the death of the Blessed Virgin, which was about fifteen years after our Lord's ascension. After he was thus released from his trust, he took his journey into Asia, and industriously applied himself to propagate Christianity, preaching where the gospel had not yet taken place, and confirming it where it had been already planted. Many churches of note and eminence were of his foundation ; but the chief place of his residence was at Ephesus, where, though St Paul had many years before settled a church, and constituted Timothy bishop

† Among the eastern people the custom was, not to sit on chairs, as it is with us, but to lie along at meals upon couches ; so that the second lay with his head in the bosom of him that was before him.

<sup>a</sup> Stanhope on the epistles and gospels, vol. 1. <sup>b</sup> Cave's Life of St John.



bishop of it, yet considering that it was a city of exceeding great resort, both upon the account of its traffic, and the conveniency of its port, the apostle thought he could not be seated more commodiously than here for dispersing the knowledge of his doctrines to natives of several nations and quarters at once.

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8. Mark ii,  
23. Luke  
vi. 1.

After several years (some say twenty-seven) spent here, he was accused to Domitian (who had then began a severe persecution) as a great asserter of atheism and impiety, and a public subverter of the religion of the empire; so that, by his command, the proconsul of Asia sent him bound to Rome, where, as Tertullian relates, (in a manner importing the fact abundantly notorious,) he was plunged into a cauldron of oil set on fire; but God, who had reserved him for farther services to the truth, restrained the heat of it, (as he did in the fiery furnace of old,) and so preserved him from this seemingly unavoidable destruction. The emperor, however, unmoved with his miraculous deliverance, ordered him to be banished to Patmos, a small disconsolate island in the Archipelago, where he remained several years, instructing the inhabitants in the faith of Christ; and where he was vouchsafed those visions and prophetic representations which he then recorded in his book of Revelation, reaping this great advantage from his exile, that though he was cut off from the society of men, he was the more entertained with immediate converse of heaven.

Upon the Death of Domitian, and the succession of Nerva, who rescinded all the odious acts of his predecessor, and, by public edict, recalled those whom the other's fury had banished, St John took the opportunity to return into Asia, and fixed his seat again at Ephesus; the rather, because the people of that place had lately martyred their bishop Timothy. Here, with the assistance of seven other bishops, he took upon him the government of the large diocese of Asia-Minor, erected oratories, and disposed of the clergy in the best manner that the circumstances of those times would permit; and having spent his time in an indefatigable execution of his charge, travelling from east to west to instruct the world in the principles of the holy religion which he was sent to

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23. Luke  
vi. 1.

His writ-  
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propagate; and \* shunning no difficulties or dangers, to redeem men's minds from vice, error, or idolatry, he finished his course, in the beginning of Trajan's reign, in a good old age, and, in the ninety-ninth year of his life, died a natural death, and was buried near Ephesus; a wonderful pattern of holiness and charity, and a writer so profound, as to deserve (by way of eminence) the character of *St John the divine*.

The first in time, though placed last, is his Apocalypse, or book of Revelation, which he wrote in his confinement at Patmos. After the preface, and admonition given to the bishops of the seven churches in Asia, it contains the persecutions which the faithful have suffered from the Jews, heretics, and Roman emperors, down as far as Julian the apostate. After this we have a view of that vengeance which God has exercised against the persons of persecutors, against the Roman empire, and the city of Rome, which is described under the name of *Babylon*, the great prostitute, seated upon seven hills; then we have a description of the peaceable and flourishing state of the church for a thousand years, and, after some molestation from the Turks, (as is supposed,) the happiness of the church

\* Eusebius (Hist. eccl. l. 3. c. 23.) gives us a very remarkable instance of this — In his visitation of the churches near Ephesus, he was much taken with a beautiful young man, whom he took, and, with a special charge, committed him to the education and instruction of the bishop of the place, who undertook the charge, instructed and baptised him. After this he thought he might a little relax the reigns of discipline; but the youth made a bad use of his liberty, and, being debauched by evil company, made himself captain of a gang of highwaymen, the most loose, cruel, and profligate wretches of the country. St John, at his return, understanding this, and having sharply reprov'd the negligence of his tutor, resolved to find him out, and without any consideration of what danger he entered upon, in venturing himself among men of such desperate fortunes and abandoned consciences, he went to the mountains, where their usual haunt was; and being there taken by the centinel, he desired to be brought before their commander, who no sooner espied him coming towards him, but he immediately fled. The aged apostle followed after, but being not able to overtake him, he passionately intreated him to stay, promising to undertake with God for his peace and pardon. He did so, and both melted into tears; and the apostle having prayed with and for him, returned him a true penitent and convert to the church; *Cave's Life of St John*.

church triumphant, set off with all the imaginable beauties of rhetoric; and, at last, we come to a formal conclusion of the whole matter, and a severe commination to all those who shall presume either to add or diminish any thing from this prophecy.

<sup>c</sup> That St John the evangelist was the author of the book of revelation, all the most ancient ecclesiastical writers were agreed, until Dionysius, bishop of Alexandria, (in his answer to one Nepos, another Egyptian bishop, who had revived the gross notion of Cerinthus, concerning the Millennium, in order to invade the use which this Nepos had made of the Apocalypse) called in question its authority, by asserting, 'that several of the ancients had disowned this book to have been wrote by any apostolic man; that Cerinthus had prefixed John's name to it, to give the better countenance to his dream of Christ's reign upon earth; and that (though it might be the work of some inspired person) it could not possibly be St John's, because its style, matter, and method, did by no means agree with his other writings.' Now, whoever looks into the ancient writers of the church, will find, that Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna, who (according to <sup>d</sup> Irenæus) had seen St John; Ignatius, bishop of Antioch, who according to <sup>e</sup> St Chrysostom) was conversant with the apostles; Justin Martyr <sup>f</sup>, Irenæus <sup>g</sup>, Clemens <sup>h</sup> of Alexandria, and Tertullian <sup>i</sup>, authors all of the second century, are unanimous in their ascribing this work to the same hand, from whence the gospel and epistles did proceed; and that therefore the opinion of one private doctor should not prevail against the authority of so many writers, who were either cotemporary, or nearly subsequent to the apostles. For, be it allowed, that there is a diversity of style, yet does not every able writer vary that according to the nature of the subject he is upon? In history, the style should be simple; in epistles, familiar; and in prophecies, majestic and sublime; and therefore what wonder is it, if, in arguments so vastly different, the same person did not always observe the same tenor, and way of writing? Nothing can be more different in their method and diction, than the book of Proverbs and the book of Canticles, and yet few have doubted, but that Solomon

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Mark ii. 13.  
Luke vi. 1.

<sup>c</sup> Beaufobre's Pref. sur l'Apocalypse. <sup>d</sup> Iren. lib. 3 c. 3.

<sup>e</sup> Hom. in Ignatium. <sup>f</sup> Dial. cum Tryph. <sup>g</sup> Lib. 4.

c. 37. <sup>h</sup> Strom. l. <sup>i</sup> De resurrect. c. 58.



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Matth. x.  
8. Mark ii.  
23. Luke  
vi. 1.

was the writer of both: But now, that Cerinthus should be the author of a book, which contains doctrines directly opposite to the errors which he broached, is a thing incredible. For, whereas Cerinthus did not believe that God made the world, or that Christ died, and rose again; the author of the Revelation <sup>k</sup> ascribes to God the work of the creation, and calls our Blessed Saviour <sup>l</sup> the *first begotten of the dead*; and whereas Cerinthus made Jesus merely the son of Joseph, and a being different from that of Christ; the author of the Revelation calls him expressly <sup>m</sup> *the Son of God*, and makes him <sup>n</sup> one and the same person with Christ. Though therefore there may be some similitude between St John's expressions, and the notions of Cerinthus, in regard to Christ's reign of a thousand years, yet it had been much more prudent in Dionysius, to have given a spiritual sense and interpretation of these expressions, than to ascribe to a wicked and sensual man (as Cerinthus was) a book, which breathes nothing but piety and holiness, an awful dread of God, and a devotion such as the angels perform in heaven.

The truth is, all circumstances concur to entitle our apostle to be the author of this book. His name frequently expressed in it; his writing it in the island of Patmos, whether none but he was banished; his directing particular epistles to the seven churches of Asia, which had either been planted or cultivated by him; and his styling himself *their brother and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ*; these, and many more circumstances that might be mentioned, added to the doctrine contained in it, which is highly suitable to the apostolic spirit and temper, do evidently bear witness, that this book was the work of John, and, consequently, of divine and canonical authority.

<sup>o</sup> Next to the Apocalypse, in order of time, are the three epistles, which St John wrote. The first of these is catholic, calculated for all times and places, and contains most excellent rules for the conduct of the Christian life, and for preservation against the crafty insinuations of seducers. The other two are but short, and directed to particular persons: the one to a lady of honourable quality; and the other to the charitable and hospitable Gaius,

<sup>k</sup> Chap. x. 6.  
<sup>a</sup> Chap. i. 5.

<sup>l</sup> Rev i. 5.  
<sup>†</sup> Cave's Life of St John.

<sup>m</sup> Chap. ii. 18.

Gaius, so kind a friend, and so courteous an entertainer, of all indigent Christians.

<sup>p</sup> Eusebius, and after him St Jerom, informs us, that St John, having perused the other three gospels, approved and confirmed them by his authority; but observing withal, that these evangelists had omitted several of our Saviour's actions, such especially as were done before the Baptist's imprisonment, he wrote his gospel in order to supply what was wanting in them: And because at this time there were several heretics (such as Cerinthus, Ebion, and their followers) sprung up in the church, who denied the divine nature of Jesus Christ, another end of his writing was, to antidote the world against the poison of these heresies, by making it appear that our blessed Saviour was God from all eternity, and before his incarnation; <sup>q</sup> and that as other evangelists had written the series of his generation according to the flesh, he might write a spiritual gospel, beginning from the divinity of Christ: which was a subject reserved for him (as the most excellent person) by the Holy Ghost.

When therefore the bishops of Asia, and several ambassadors from other churches, had been for some time soliciting him, he caused them to proclaim a general fast, to seek the blessing of heaven on so great and momentuous an undertaking; and when this was done, he set about the work, and \* completed it in so excellent and sublime a manner, that the ancients generally resembled him to an eagle soaring aloft within the clouds, whither the weak eye of man was not able to follow him: for, 'as the evangelical

A. M.  
4034, &c.  
Ann Dom.  
10, &c.  
from the  
beginning  
of the Go-  
spels to  
Matt. ix. 8.  
Mark ii.  
23 Luke  
vi. 1.

<sup>p</sup> Hist. eccl. lib. 3. c. 24.

<sup>q</sup> Whitby's Preface to St

John's gospel,

\* His gospel was originally wrote in Greek, but in a Greek that abounds with Hebraisms, as do the other evangelists. His words are peculiar to himself, and his phrase used in an uncommon sense, which may possibly make his way of writing not so grateful to some nice masters of eloquence. In citing places from the Old Testament, though he sometimes makes use of the Septuagint, yet he usually translates from the Hebrew original, and generally renders them word for word: for being an Hebrew of the Hebrews, and admirably skilled in the language of his country, this probably made him less exact in his Greek composures, wherein he had no advantage besides what was immediately communicated from above. But what he wanted in the politeness of his style, was abundantly made up in the excellence and sublimity of his matter; *Cave's Life of St John.*

A. M. ' lical writings (says<sup>r</sup> St Basil transcend all the other parts  
 4034, &c. ' of the Holy Scriptures; because in other parts God  
 Ann Dom ' speaks to us by his servants the prophets; but in the go-  
 30, &c. ' spels our Lord, who is God blessed for evermore, speaks  
 from the ' to us himself: So among all the evangelical preachers  
 beginning ' none is like St John, the son of thunder, for the subli-  
 of the Go- ' ty of his discourses, beyond any man's capacity duly  
 spels to ' to reach and comprehend.'  
 Matth. ix. ' to reach and comprehend.'  
 8 Mark ii. ' to reach and comprehend.'  
 23, Luke  
 vi. 1.

## CHAP. II.

*From the beginning of the second Passover to our Lord's Transfiguration; in all, one Year and about four Months.*

### THE HISTORY.

A. M. OUR Blessed Saviour was now in the second year of  
 4035, &c. his public ministry, when the near approach of the  
 Ann Dom passover \* (which was the second after his baptism) call-  
 31, &c. ed him to Jerusalem. On the south-east side of the ci-  
 from Matt. ty there was a famous pool †, and an hospital called  
 xii. 1. Mark  
 ii. 23. Luke  
 vi. 1. to  
 Matt xvii.

*Bethesda,*

14. Mark. † Hom. 16. tom. 1.  
 ix 14. Luke \* From the time that our Lord first began his ministry to  
 ix 37. John the conclusion of it, there had been four passovers held at Je-  
 vii. 1. rusalem; all, except the last, are not mentioned by the three  
 The second first evangelists; but St John has been mindful to set every one  
 passover, down; the first, chap. ii. 13. the second, chap. v. 1.; the  
 John v. 5. the third, chap. vi. 4.; and the fourth, chap. xiii. 1.; *Pool's*  
*Annotations.*

† The word *κολυμβήθρα* signifies any *pool*, or *head of water*, that is deep enough for a man to swim in: But as, in hot countries more especially, the use of constant bathing was highly necessary, for which purpose it was usual in every great city to have public baths erected, some have imagined, that this pool was a large basin of water, of this kind; and that the porticos about it were places made for the conveniency of dressing or undressing in the shade, for those that were minded to bathe. However this be, it is certain, that in ancient times there were two pools, within the compass of the mount, on which the temple stood, the one called the *upper pool*, 2 Kings xviii. 17. and the other, the *pool of Siloam by the king's garden*, Neh. iii. 15. that St. Jerom (who himself had been at Jerusalem) makes mention of two reservoirs, one filled with the rains that fall in the winter, and the other with water of a deep red colour,



*Bethesda* \*, which consisted of five porticos; in which lay a great multitude of poor impotent people, with distempers of all kinds, waiting for the moving of the water; for at certain times an angel came from heaven, and putting the pool in a fermentation, conveyed such a medicinal virtue into it, that the first person who entered it, after such commotion, was cured of whatsoever distemper he had. On the Sabbath-day our Saviour came to this place; and seeing a poor paralytic †, who had been in that condition for the space of eight and thirty years, and lain there a long while in expectation of a cure; but all in vain, because, whenever the water was moved, some one

A. M.  
4035. &c.  
A. D. Dom.  
31, &c.  
from  
Matth. xii.  
1. Mark ii.  
13. Luke  
vi. 1. John  
v. 1. to  
Matth. xviii.  
14. Mark  
ix. 14.  
Luke ix.  
37. John  
vii. 1.

or

colour, as if it still retained a tinge of the victims that formerly were washed in it; and that Mr Maundrell, in his travels, page 107. informs us, that when he was there, he saw still remaining what was reputed the pool of Bethesda, whereof he gives us the particular dimensions, and tells us, that at its west end there seem to be some old arches, not unlikely the porches in which sat that multitude of lame, halt, and blind, which are mentioned by St John chap. v.; *Dr Pearce's Vindication of our Saviour's miracles*; and *Wells's Geography of the New Testament*, chap. 4.

Our Saviour  
cures the  
paralytic  
on the Sab-  
bath-day,  
and vindic-  
ates him-  
self for so  
doing be-  
fore the  
Sanhedrim

\* Some will have this word to signify a drain, or sink-house, because the water which came from the temple, and the place where the victims were washed, by subterraneous passages, ran into it; but most interpreters expound it *an house of mercy*, so called, say some, because the erecting of baths was an act of great kindness to the common people, whose indispositions, in hot countries, required frequent bathing; though the generality rather think, that it more properly had that name from God's great goodness shewn to his people, in giving this healing virtue to these waters: *Pool's Annotations*; and *Pearce's Vindication of our Saviour's miracles*.

† The word ἀσθενία, which we render *infirmity*, or *weakness*, is indeed a general name for almost all distempers; but here it is so limited in its signification, by the circumstances occurring in the man's history, that it can properly denote no other disease than what we call a *confirmed palsy*. For, besides that the symptoms of no other distemper do so exactly agree with the description given of this infirmity, both in point of its long continuance, and extreme weakness; the very word *weakness*, in its most obvious sense, answers exactly to such a relaxation of the nervous system, as the palsy is known to be; and (what is no mean circumstance) our Saviour makes use of the same form, and method of cure, to this very man, that he applies to another paralytic, *Rise, take up thy bed and walk*, Matth. ix. 6.

A. M. or other always stepped in before, and prevented him ;  
 4035, &c. \* he immediately healed him with a word's speaking, and  
 Ann Dom at the same time † ordered him to take up his bed, and  
 31, &c. walk home ; but while he was doing this, the Jews ex-  
 from Matt claimed against him for bearing a burden on the Sabbath-  
 xii 1. day,  
 Mark ii, 23.  
 Luke vi. 1.

John v. 1.  
 to Matth. \* If it be asked, how it came to pass, that of the multitude  
 xviii. 14. of infirm people, who lay at this pool, our Saviour should  
 Mark xi. think fit to cure but one ? the answer is obvious, because he  
 14 Luke was an object most to be compassionated of any in the place, not  
 ix. 37. only because he was too feeble to step into the water himself,  
 John vii 1. and too poor to have any to assist him, but, more especially,  
 because had been now a long while in this condition, and yet  
 still depended upon the good providence of God for an oppor-  
 tunity to be cured at one time or other. To cure at once whole  
 multitudes, indeed, sounds more popular, and carries the face  
 of a more extensive goodness ; but, besides that our Saviour  
 might, in this case very probably conform to the rule of cure  
 established providentially at Bethesda, which was, to heal but  
 one person at one time, his great design, in every action of this  
 kind, was to prove his character and commission from God, to  
 which end one single and incontestible miracle was as sufficient  
 an evidence as a thousand. The short is, since our Lord was  
 at liberty to do what he would with his own, or to bestow his  
 favours where he pleased, his goodness was conspicuous in  
 chusing the most helpless object, and his wisdom no less mani-  
 fest, in leaving the rest to the standing miracle of the pool ;  
*Bishop Smallbroke's Vindication of our Saviour's miracles, p. 525.*

† It is very observable, that whenever our Lord did any mi-  
 racle, he generally adjoined some circumstance or other, to de-  
 note the truth and reality of it. Thus, after his multiplication  
 of the loaves and fishes, he ordered his disciples to gather up  
 the fragments, which amounted to twelve baskets full. Upon  
 his changing the water into wine at Cana, he commanded the  
 servants to carry it to the ruler of the feast, for him to taste it.  
 When he had healed the leper near Capernaum, he sent him to  
 present his oblation in testimony of his cure. And here, for the  
 same reason, viz. the demonstration of the completeness of his  
 cure, he bids the paralytic take up his bed and go home. But  
 why did he this on the Sabbath-day ? Even to make his divine  
 power and mission more universally known, especially in Jeru-  
 salem, the capital of the nation, and centre of the Jewish church,  
 by first working this miracle on the Sabbath-day, when there  
 were more people at liberty to view and consider it ; and then,  
 sending his patient along the streets, in a very uncommon man-  
 ner, and, to make the people more inquisitive, with his bed  
 upon his back ; *Calmet's Commentary.*

day, which was \* directly <sup>a</sup> contrary to their law. The man excused himself, by declaring, that the person who had miraculously cured him, commanded him so to do, which he thought a sufficient warrant; but, when they understood that it was Jesus, they, <sup>b</sup> brought him before the Sanhedrim, with a design to take away his life, as an open profaner of the Sabbath. Here, in defence of himself, he alledged,—That, ‘since God (from whose rest <sup>to Matt. xvii. 14.</sup> they took the observation of the Sabbath) did, on that day, and all others, exercise the works of providence, <sup>Mark ii. 23.</sup> preservation, and mercy, there could be no reason why <sup>Luke vi. 1.</sup> he, who was his Son, and invested with full authority <sup>John v. 1.</sup> from him, (as <sup>to Matt. xvii. 14.</sup> he proves immediately in a set speech <sup>Mark ix. 14.</sup> before the council,) might not employ himself on the <sup>Luke ix. 37.</sup> Sabbath, as well as any other day, in actions of the like <sup>John vii. 1.</sup> nature;’ which provoked the Jews still more and more against him, for they looked upon him now, not only as a Sabbath-breaker, but a blasphemer likewise, who by making himself the Son of God <sup>John v. 17.</sup> †, had claimed a co-equality with him.

What

\* The prohibition runs in these words:—*Thus saith the Lord, Take heed to yourselves, and bear no burden on the Sabbath day, nor bring it in by the gates of Jerusalem. neither carry forth a burden out of your houses on the Sabbath day, neither do ye any work, but hallow ye the Sabbath-day as I commanded your fathers,* Jer. xvii. 21, 22.; and according to the Jewish canons, those who do this, were punishable, either by death or scourging. It must be acknowledged therefore, that our Saviour’s injunction to the late impotent man, was contrary to the letter of the law; but then it may be justly said, that it was not contrary to the sense and intention of it. The law only prohibited civil labour, and restrained men from carrying such burdens as they were wont to do in the way of their trade; but it did not forbid the doing of any thing that might be a testimony of God’s mercy or goodness to mankind. As therefore the Sabbath was made for the honour of God, and this action was a public monument of his mercy and power, the man, properly speaking, did not break the Sabbath, neither did our Lord deserve any censure from the Jews, especially considering, that as he was a prophet, even by their own rules, he had power to require what was contrary to the ceremonial rest of the Sabbath; *Pool’s* and *Whitby’s Annations*; and *Calmet’s Commentary*.

<sup>a</sup> Jer. xvii. 21.

<sup>b</sup> John v. 16.

<sup>c</sup> Ver. 19. ad finem.

† From hence it seems to follow, that though the Jews had very high conceptions of the Messiah, and were confident, that



A. M. What the the result of our Saviour's defence before the  
 4035. &c. Sanhedrim was, we cannot tell, because none of the evan-  
 Ann Dom gelists have acquainted us; but the sequel of the history  
 31. &c. informs us, that it noways abated the malice of the Pha-  
 from Matt. risees, because, on the very next Sabbath-day, upon his  
 xii 1. disciples pulling some ears of corn \*, (as they passed thro'  
 Mark ii 23. the fields,) rubbing them in their hands: and so eating  
 Luke vi. 1. them, because they were really hungry, they began again  
 John v 1. to clamour against this violation of the Sabbath; until  
 xvii 14. our Saviour, in vindication of his disciples, both from  
 Mark ix 14. the example of David † and his attendants, (who ate the  
 Luke ix. 37. shew-  
 John vi. 1. bread)

when he came, he would be a mighty prince, and subdue all  
 Matt. xii. 1. other nations under his feet; yet they never once imagined that  
 Mark iii. 23. he would be God, or, in the strict and sublime sense of the  
 Luke vi. 1. word, *the Son of God*, though in the very prophecies, which (as  
 He vindi- they themselves acknowledge) relate to the Messiah, he is cal-  
 cates his led IMMANUEL, Isaiah vii. 14. and elsewhere, *the mighty God*,  
 disc pl s the everlasting Father, the Prince of peace, Isaiah ix. 6; *Whitby's*  
 for eating the ear of the Sabbath-day. *Annotations.*

\* What our Lord's disciples did in this case, could not be  
 accounted any unjust invasion of another's property, because  
 the law had indulged them thus far:—*When thou goest into thy*  
*neighbour's standing corn thou mayst pluck the ears with thy hand;*  
*but thou shalt not move a sickle to thy neighbour's standing corn,* Deut.  
 xxiii. 25. It was not then for plucking the ears of corn, much  
 less (as some say) for breaking their falls, before they had ce-  
 lebrated the public offices, (which was contrary to the custom  
 of the Jews, Acts ii. 15.), that the Pharisees took exceptions to  
 the disciples; but for plucking them on the Sabbath-day,  
 whereof they thought this action (which at other times was  
 lawful enough) to be a violation, and accordingly our Savi-  
 our's whole vindication of them turns upon this supposition;  
*Hammond's and Whitby's Annotations.*

† There is something very cogent in our Saviour's argu-  
 ment, taken from David's practice, because, according to the  
 concession of the Jews themselves, his example contains two  
 things tending to excuse the violation of the Sabbath; 1. That  
 they suppose, that David and his men fled on the Sabbath-  
 day, and, yet were not guilty of breaking the rest of the Sab-  
 bath; for *our masters think it lawful, say they, in him whom the*  
*Gentiles, or thieves, pursue, to profane the Sabbath, by the preservation*  
*of his life, even as David when Saul pursued to kill him, fled and*  
*escaped.* 2. That their own canons allowed the laity to eat of  
 the shew-bread for the preservation of life; for *it is a small*  
*thing, say they, to hold, that it is lawful for us to eat of the bread*  
*removed from the table; it would be lawful for us, in the extre-*  
*mity*

shew bread \* ; which it was unlawful for the laity to eat) <sup>A M.</sup>  
 when they were hungry, and from the example of their <sup>4035. &c.</sup>  
 own priests, who performed the work of the temple on <sup>Ann Dom</sup>  
 the Sabbath-day, endeavoured to convince them, ' that <sup>31. &c.</sup>  
 ' works of necessity were sometimes permitted, even to <sup>from Matt.</sup>  
 ' the breach of a ritual command; that acts of mercy <sup>xii. 1 Mark</sup>  
 ' were the best and most acceptable method of serving <sup>ii 23. Luke</sup>  
 ' God upon any day whatever; that it was inverting the <sup>v. 1. John</sup>  
 ' the order of things, to suppose, that man was made for <sup>Matt xvii.</sup>  
 ' the Sabbath, and not the Sabbath for the benefit of man: <sup>4 Mark</sup>  
 ' But, if even it were not so, that he, as the Son of <sup>ix. 14. Luke</sup>  
 ' God †, and, consequently, Lord of the Sabbath, had a <sup>x 37. John</sup>  
 ' power <sup>vii 1.</sup>

*quity of hunger, even to eat of the bread, now sanctified upon the table, if there were no other. And indeed this opinion, that it was lawful to violate the Sabbath for the preservation of life seems plainly to have obtained before the translation of the Septuagint, who render the words in Exod. xii. 16. to this purpose, Ye shall do no servile work on it, but that which shall be done for the safety of life; Whitby's Annotations.*

• The shew-bread (which in Hebrew is literally *the bread of faces*) was so called, not because it was set upon the golden table which was in the sanctuary, but because it was placed *before the Lord*, i. e. not far from the ark of the covenant, which was the symbol of his more immediate presence. These loaves, according, to the number of the tribes, were twelve: They were made four square, covered over with leaves of gold, and were of a considerable bigness, having about three quarts of flour in each. They were served up hot every Sabbath-day, and, at the same time, the stale ones, which had been exposed the whole preceding week, were taken away, and allowed to be eaten by none but the priests, and that only in the holy place, which was the tabernacle at first, and afterwards the temple, Lev. xxiv. 5. &c. And the reason of this institution seems to have been, to represent, in a more lively mannner, to the people, God's government and presence among them: that, as the tabernacle first, and then the temple, was his palace and place of residence, so these weekly services of bread wine, and salt. (say the Jews,) were to denote his habitation among them, as if he had been an earthly prince, for whom such provisions are made; *Calmet's Dictionary* under the word, and *Lamy's Introduction*.

† There are some who pretend to infer, from the passage of St Mark, chap. ii. 27. that the words in St Matthew. *The Son of Man is Lord also of the Sabbath*, chap. xii. 8. are of the same import with, *The Sabbath was made for man*; so that the *son of man* is here put for *all men* in general, and, consequently, the sense of the words must be, that every one is *lord of the Sabbath*,

A. M. 4035. &c. Ann Dom 31, &c. 'power to dispense with the ceremonial laws <sup>d</sup> concerning it.'

Not long after this, our Saviour left Jerusalem, and returned into Galilee, where on another Sabbath-day, while he was preaching, there stood before him a man, whose right-hand was shrunk, and withered; and, when the Scribes and Pharisees insidiously watched him whether he would cure him or not, our Lord bade him stand up in the midst of the assembly as an object of public commiseration, and turning to these superstitious observers of the Sabbath, put the question \* to them, whether they thought it lawful, on the Sabbath-day, to do good, or ill, actually to save life, or negligently to destroy it? And then, from their

Mat. xii. 9.  
Mark iii. 1.  
Luke vi. 6.  
and himself, for curing the man with the withered hand on the same

bath, to observe or dispense with it, according to the call or exigency of his affairs. But besides that the phrase, *Son of Man*, which is used no less than eighty-eight times in the New Testament, is, in all other places, set to denote our Blessed Lord, and in Dan vii. 13. from whence it is originally taken, it is thought by all ancient Jews, as well as Christians, to signify the Messiah only; it is plain, that these two passages are distinct propositions in St Mark, chap. ii. 27. 28. and that they can relate to no other than our Saviour Christ; because he tells the Pharisees, and therein means of himself, that, in that place, *there was one greater than the temple, i. e.* whose prophetic office was of more consequence to the world than the sacerdotal administrations in the temple, and ought therefore, least of all, to be interrupted by a superstitious observation of the Sabbath. *The Sabbath was made for man*, must therefore signify, that it was first appointed for the good and benefit of man; and, being so, it cannot reasonably be supposed to oblige him to any thing so contrary to humanity as starving or debilitating his nature; and therefore, as *the Son of Man came not to destroy men's lives, but to save them*, he must have power, in such cases as concern the good and welfare of mankind, to dispense with the strict rest of the Sabbath which the law required; *Calmet's Commentary*; and *Hammond's* and *Whitby's Annotations*.

<sup>d</sup> Mark ii. 27.

\* This is not contrary to what St Matthew, chap. xii. 10. tells us, *viz.* That they asked him, because both are true. They asked him, *Whether it was lawful to heal?* And he, in reply, says, *I also will ask you one thing: Is it lawful on the Sabbath-day to do good, or to do evil?* Luke vi. 9. We are not however to suppose, that by doing evil, our Saviour propounded to the Pharisees, Whether, on the Sabbath-day, it was lawful to do that, which, on any other day, is utterly unlawful? for then, without doubt, they would have had a ready answer

for



their own practice, in running to the relief of any dumb creature on the Sabbath-day, he fairly inferred, that whatever their hypocritical pretences might be, they themselves esteemed it lawful to do good on that day; and so, looking about him with some marks of indignation for their strange perverseness, he commanded the poor man to stretch out his lame hand, and that very moment it became as sound as the other.

The Pharisees, however, though silenced by his arguments, and surprised at his miracles, would not surcease their malice, but joined in consultation with the Herodians (though a sect quite opposite to them in principles) how they might take away his life; which when our Saviour understood, he withdrew with his disciples \* toward the

feast.

for him; but only, whether, according to the distinction of the Sabbath, it was lawful to do good, or not to do it, to save life, or not to save it, when a man had it equally in his power. And the reason why our Saviour instances in saving a life is, because it was a maxim then among the Jews, that, on the Sabbath-day, all servile work was prohibited, except where the life of any man or beast was concerned; but the modern Jews are of a contrary opinion, and, in hatred to Christians, (as Grotius thinks) have loaded the observation of the Sabbath with such trifling and superstitious practices, as their forefathers and ancient doctors knew nothing of; *Whitby's* and *Beausobre's Annotations*, and *Calmet's Commentary*.

\* It was a direction which our Saviour gave to his disciples, *When they persecute you in this city, flee to another*, Matth. x. 23. and a rule which himself put in practice: For, when by his doctrine and miracles he could do no good upon men by reason of the hardness of their hearts, Mark iii. 5. he usually departed, and retired, that he might give place to their wrath, and secure himself from their malice, Matth. xii. 15. and John viii. 59. When the providence of God brings trials upon us, we may reasonably hope, that his mercy will be magnified in our rescue from them; but there is not the same assurance due to those troubles which our own forwardness or indiscretion involve us in. God hath no where promised to work miracles for our deliverance, nor engaged to save those who are not careful to save themselves. He hath commanded us *to take up our cross*, when he lays it in our way; but he hath not commanded, that we should go out and seek it; nay, or that we should meet it, when we can pass by another way, and honestly, and with a good conscience, escape from it. He hath promised to succour them that are tempted, *i. e.* such as are purely passive in the thing; but, when men break their ranks, and, without

A. M.  
4035, &c.  
Ann. Dom.  
31, &c.  
from  
Mat. xii. 1.  
Mark ii. 13.  
Luke vi. 1.  
John v. 1.  
to Matth.  
xvii. 14.  
Mark ix.  
14. Luke  
ix. 47.  
John vii. 1.  
Matth. xii.  
14. Mark  
iii. 6. Luke  
vi. 11.

A. M.  
4035 &c  
Ann Dom  
37, &c.  
from Matt  
xii. 1. Mark  
ii. 23. Luke  
vi. 1. John  
v. 1 to  
Matth. xvii  
14. Mark ix  
14. Luke  
ix 37  
John vii. 1.

~~~~~  
Matt. x. 1.
Mark iii.
13. Luke
vi. 12.

His chuf-
ing his
twelve a-
postles,

sea-side; but which way soever he went, his name was now grown so famous, that vast multitudes, not only out of Galilee, but from Jerusalem, from the provinces of Judea, and Idumæa * and all the country about Jordan; as far as the Mediterranean sea, to the coasts of Tyre and Sidon hearing the report of his miraculous power to cure all diseases with a word of his mouth, the touch of his hand, or barely the touch of his garment, came, with their sick and possessed, for help, and, as fast as they came, he cured them. Nay, to such a degree was his fame increased, that the very devils and unclean spirits publicly confessed that he was the Son of God, till, upon all occasions, they were restrained and compelled to silence.

Finding some inconvenience in the pressures of the people, he ordered his disciples, for the time to come, to have a small vessel always in readiness for him to step into upon occasion; and so retired to a solitary mountain †, where

without orders from their commander, will needs march up (as it were) to the mouth of a loaded cannon, by turning their own tempters, this is not courage, but fool hardiness: and, whatever expectations these men may cherish of God's assistance in such cases, they are not the effects of a vigorous faith, and well-grounded trust, but of a blind and hot-headed presumption; *Stanhope's Occasional Sermons.*

* Though this be no more than a Greek name derived from the Hebrew *Edom*, yet it is not to be understood of the original habitation of the Edomites, mount Seir, but rather of that southern part of the province of Judea, which, during the captivity of the Jews at Babylon, being left destitute, or not sufficiently inhabited by its natives, seems to have been possessed by the neighbouring Idumæans. These Idumæans, when afterwards conquered by the Maccabees, chose rather to embrace the Jewish religion than to quit the habitations they had taken possession of; and, though hereupon they were incorporated into the body of the Jewish nation, yet that tract of Judea which they inhabited did not so soon lose the name of Idumæa, derived from them but retained it, not only in our Saviour's days, but for a considerable time afterwards; *Well's Geography of the New Testament.*

† Some have thought that the words ἐν τῇ προσευχῇ τῷ Θεῷ, should be rendered *in an house of prayer of God*, or in a *synagogue* dedicated to the service of God; but then they will be concerned to find out any house of prayer which at this time stood on a mountain, or any place (except the temple) which

was

where he continued all night in prayer, intending next morning to make an election of some particular persons, both to be witnesses of his actions and discourses, and, after his departure out of the world, his vicegerents upon earth, founders of his church, and propagators of his gospel.

The number of these, according to the patriarchs, was twelve; Simon (who is likewise named *Peter*) and Andrew; James * (commonly called *the Great*) and John; Philip and Bartholomew †; Matthew and Thomas;

James, was called by that name: nor can we conceive why our Lord should go into a mountain to pray, if it were not for the privacy and retirement of it, which he could not have had in any common place of divine worship. Our Saviour however, being about to send out his twelve apostles, thought that so great a work as this could not be done, without offering up his solemn addresses to God for their success, and accordingly having found out a place of retirement, he hither betook himself, and as the evangelists inform us, continued *all night in prayer*, leaving the bishops and governors of his church an example what they are to do in the great and momentous affair of appointing persons to the ministry of the gospel; *Whitby's* and *Pool's Annotations*.

* These two brothers our Saviour calls *Boanerges*, a word composed of two Hebrew or Syriac words, but which have suffered some alteration in their passing into the Greek language. For whether it be that the Greek transcriber has mistaken them, or that this might be the corrupt way of pronouncing them in Galilee, certain it is, that the originals are *beni rehem*, denoting *sons of thunder*, or *of a tempest*; a name given to them in allusion to the natural heat and zeal of their temper, and that vehemence and efficacy wherewith our Saviour foresaw that they would preach the gospel. Of the former of these they gave an early instance, in their desire to call down fire from heaven to consume the Samaritans, Luke ix. 54; and, in the Acts of the apostles, we find that Peter and John are the chief actors and speakers in the defence and propagation of the gospel, and that the zeal of James and Peter seems to be the reason why the one was slain by Herod, and the other imprisoned, in order to the like execution: *Calmet's Commentary*, and *Beausobre's* and *Whitby's Annotations*.

† The name given here to this apostle, is not his proper but patronymical name, and imports only the son of *Tholomew*, or *Tolmai*; so that we are still at a loss for his personal name, unless we will admit of the conjecture, that he was indeed no other than Nathanael. To this purpose it is remarkable, 1st, That as no other evangelist makes mention of Nathanael but

A. M. James, * (commonly called *the Less*,) and Simon † the Canaanite; Judas, the brother of this James, and ‡ Judas Iscariot, who so justly deserved the title of *traitor*.

40 5, &c.
Ann Dom
31, &c.
from Matt.

xii. i. Mark

ii. 23. Luke

vi. i. John

v. 1. to

Matt. xvii.

ix. 14. Mark

ix. 14.

Luke ix.

37. John

vii. 1.

St John, so he never once makes mention of Bartholomew. 2dly, That in the catalogue of the apostles, Philip and Bartholomew are always coupled together, and were, very probably, sent out together to preach the gospel: And fit companions they were, supposing Nathanael to be the man with whom, it is plain, that Philip had an intimacy, and was the first instrument of bringing him to Jesus. 3dly, That this Nathanael is by St John, chap. xxi. 2. named in company with several of the apostles, upon our Saviour's shewing himself at the sea of Tiberias, after his resurrection, which the evangelist tells us was the third time of his doing so, ver. 14. and some presumption that he was one of them. 4thly, That, at the two former times, it is expressly said, that he appeared to the eleven, John xx. 19, 26. And here, at the third time of his appearance, those that are named with Nathanael are all of that number. From these considerations, it is more than probable that Nathanael was one of the apostles; which can only be accounted for, by supposing that St John calls the same person by his proper name, *Nathanael*, whom the other evangelist calls by his patronymical, *Bartholomew*; *Stanhope on the epistles and gospels*, vol. 4.

* Thomas, in Hebrew, or Syriac either, signifies *a twin*, and so is the same with Didymus, that other name whereby this apostle is sometimes called.

† Some are of opinion, that Simon is here called the *Canaanite*, from Cana, a little town in Galilee, the place of his birth and habitation; but others rather think, since this apostle is by St Luke, chap. vi. 15. called *Zelotes*, the *καταγίτες* and *ζηλωτῆς* are perfectly the same, just as Cephias and Peter, Tabitha and Dorcas are. That there was a faction among the Jews, a little before the destruction of their city and nation, who assumed to themselves the title of *zealots*, (out of an hypocritical ostentation of holiness, though at the same time in their hearts and practices they were the lowest of men,) we have given a sufficient account above, p. 130; but whether that faction was in being in our Saviour's time, or whether to be of the number of such zealots, may not be an injury and reproach to this apostle's memory, is much to be doubted; *Hammond's Annotations*, and *Calmet's Commentary*.

‡ This man's surname may be taken, either from the place of his birth, which was Carioth in the tribe of Issachar, whereof we have mention in Josh. xvi. 25. and Amos ii. 2. or from the Syriac word *Secariat*, denoting *the purse or wallet* which it was the office of this Judas to carry; or from the word *Aspha-*

* To these he gave the name of *apostles* †, and as he perceived the multitude gathering round him, these he called nearer than the rest to him, and began that most excellent discourse, which comprises all the great principles of the

3 E 2

Christian

ra, or *Iscara*, which signifies *to strangle*; and therefore a name which the evangelists might give him after his death: But all these etymologies are no more than mere conjectures, *Hammond's* and *Beaufobre's Annotations*, and *Calmet's Commentary*.

* The wisdom of Christ saw fit to admit Judas into the number of his disciples, that by him the council of God, in giving up his son to death, and the predictions of the prophets might be fulfilled, Acts i. 16. This very person, however, is by our Lord sent to preach the gospel, to cure diseases, and to cast out devils, who had himself a devil, John vi. 70. thereby to teach us, that the mission of a person may be valid, though he be not sanctified; and that in things belonging to the ministerial office, we should hearken even to such persons and obey them; *W hitby's Annotations*.

† The word ἀπόστολος signifies *an envoy*, and was a name given by the Jews to any messenger in general, but more especially to such persons as were sent by the high-priest, and heads of the people, to collect the tithes, and other dues belonging to the temple or synagogue, or to carry their orders and mandates to the cities and provinces, when any affairs relating to religion were transacted; and to this custom St Paul seems to allude, where he styles himself *an apostle, not of man, neither by man, but of Jesus Christ*, Gal. i. 1. Our Saviour indeed, as he was no lover of innovations, took the word from among the Jews; but then he raised it to a much higher and more honourable signification; for himself declares, that he sent out his apostles, even as his Father sent out him, John xi. 21. *i. e.* with a full commission to act in his stead, even as he did in God's: and accordingly we may observe, that as the Father gave judgment to the Son, John v. 22. so in effect the son gives judgment to the apostles, Matth. xix. 28. and Luke xxii. 30.; that as the Father gave the Son power to forgive sins upon earth. Matth. ix. 6. so the Son gives power to the apostles to remit sins on earth likewise, John xi. 23.; that as the Father gave the Son the honour to sit down with him on his throne, so the Son gave the apostles the privilege to sit with him on thrones, Matth. xix. 28. and Luke xxii. 30; and that as the Father gave the Son to be the foundation or corner stone of the church, Matth. xxi. 42. so the Son gave the apostles to be foundations upon a foundation; for so the church is said to be built upon the foundation of the apostles, *Christ being the chief corner stone*, Eph. ii. 20.; *Hammond's Annotations*.

A. M.
4035, &c.
Ann Dom
31. &c.
from Matt.
xii. 1. Mark
ii. 13. Luke
vi. 1. John
v. 1. 10
Matt. xvii.
14. Mark
ix. 14.
Luke ix.
37. John
vii. 6.

A. M. Christian religion, and is commonly called the * *sermon on the mount*.
 4035, &c.
 Ann Dom

31, &c. Herein he pronounces divers blessings, both spiritual and temporal, to such as the generality of the world esteemed miserable; to the poor in spirit, or humble minded; to the kind and merciful; to the pious mourners; to the peace-makers; to the meek and patient; to the pure in heart; to such as hunger and thirst after righteousness; and to such as are persecuted upon the account thereof. Herein he instructs the apostles more especially in their duty; and in several comparisons setting before them the high station wherein he had so lately placed them, and how much it would

from Matt. xii. 1. Mark ii. 23. Luke vi. 1. John v. 1. to Matt. xvi. 14. Mark ix. 14. Luke ix. 37. John vii. 1.
 Matt. vi. 1.
 Luke vi. 20.
 His famous sermon on the mount.

* The mountain where our Lord delivered his discourse is generally supposed to be Tabor; for by comparing St Mark, chap. iii. 13. with the other two evangelists, Matthew, chap. xiv. 23. and Luke, chap. vi. 12, &c. we may perceive, that it was not far distant from some part of the sea of Tiberias, whither our Lord had retired very lately from the Pharisees, and about five or six leagues from Capernaum, whither he returned after his descent from this mount. But then the question is, whether this sermon be the same with what we find recorded by St Luke, chap. vi. 20? Now, in order to resolve this, we may observe. 1st, That the sermon in St Matthew was delivered before the healing of the leper, chap. viii. 2.; whereas St Luke, who promises to discourse in order of what Christ did, gives us first the story of the leper, chap. v. 12. and then an account of Christ's sermon, chap. vi. 20. 2^{dly}, That the sermon in St Matthew, our Lord preached on the mount, and called his disciples up to him; whereas St Luke informs us, that our Lord came down with his disciples from a mount, and stood in the plain, and from thence preached what he recorded, ver. 20. And, 3^{dly}, That St Luke omits the much greater part of the sermon, as it is recorded by St Matthew, mentions only four beatitudes; whereas St Matthew speaks of eight, and has added four woes, ver. 24. &c. whereof we find no indications in St Matthew. Since the sermons then are so very different in their matter, as well as in the circumstances of time and place, it is reasonable to suppose, that they were not the same; though, considering that after both the sermons we find our Lord returning to Capernaum, and healing the centurion's servant, Matth. viii. 5. and Luke vii. 1. we may probably conjecture, that he spake the sermon in St Matthew, whilst he was sitting on the mount, to his disciples; but that in St Luke he afterwards spake when he came down into the plain, chap. vi. 20. in the audience of all the people, chap. vii. 1.; *Whitby's Annotations.*

would redound to their honour, if they behaved well, and to their dishonour, if otherwise; he recommends to them, above all other things, purity of life and conversation. Herein he expounds the true meaning, and shews the just extent of several moral precepts, viz. the laws against murder, against adultery, against perjury; that concerning retaliation, and that of loving our neighbour; and rescues them from the wretched glosses and interpretations which the Jews had put upon them. Herein he explains, and teaches the proper method of performing with acceptance, the several duties of charity to the poor, prayer, and fasting. Herein he dissuades us from all covetous inclinations, and anxious thoughts concerning the things of this world, from a consciousness of our being under the providential care of God; and having laid down several other precepts and instructions, he concludes the whole with this admonition, — *That whoever heard, believed, and practised the things contained in his discourses, would, in the event, be like a wise builder, who laid the foundation of his house upon a rock, not to be affected by wind or weather, but that he who heard and practised them not, would be like a man who built his house upon the sand, soon to be blown down by the winds, and washed away by the floods* *.

This sermon was delivered with such a grace and majesty, as gained the applause of the whole audience, and made them very readily declare their sense of the difference between such divine discourses, and the jejune harangues † of their ordinary teachers, the scribes; and, to

* The word which we render *floods*, is in the Greek ποταμοί, which, tho' it chiefly signifies *rivers*, i. e. such streams as arise from springs, does frequently denote *land-floods*, or *torrents*, which are occasioned by any tempestuous sudden rains; for so Eustathius explains the word, in his notes upon this passage in Homer, Iliad 4.

Ὡς δ' ὅτι χεῖμα ῥοὶ ποταμί κατ' ἔρσφι ρέοντες,

Ἐς μισγάγκειαν συμβαλλέον ὀβριμον ὕδωρ

Κρῦν ἔκ μεγάλων, &c.

† The words in the text are, *He taught them as one that had authority and not as the scribes*, Matt. vii. 29 But they certainly are mistaken, who interpret the words in this sense: — ‘He taught them as the author of the doctrine which he preached; as one who had authority in his own name to propound the terms of life and death;’ because it is not only contrary to the nature of his prophetic office, but to his own frequent decla-

A. M. to confirm his doctrine by the testimony of miracles, our
 4735, &c. Blessed Saviour, upon his descent from the mount, healed
 Ann Dom a leper, and then remitted him to the priest, to make his
 31, &c. from Matt. oblation, in acknowledgment of his cure.

xii. 1. At his return to Capernaum he cured, at a distance,
 Mark ii. 23. the favourite servant of the Roman centurion *, who had
 Luke vi. 1. made an ample declaration of his divine power, and there-
 John v. 1. upon received from him as ample commendation of his
 Matt. faith; and, at his arrival at the gates of Naim †, he re-
 xvii 14. stored to life a widow's only son, as the people were car-
 Mark ix. 14. rying him out to his funeral, to the great joy and comfort
 Luke ix. 37. of his parent, and the no less wonder and astonishment
 John vii. 1. of the spectators, who, upon this occasion, glorified God,
 Matt. viii. 5. and
 Luke vii. 1. His curing
 the centu-
 rion's ser-
 vant, and
 raising the
 widow's son
 at Naim,
 Luke vii.
 11.

declarations, that *the doctrine which he taught was not his own, but his who sent him; and that he spake, not of himself or in his own name, but as he had heard from his Father, and as he had commanded him to speak*, John vii. 16, 17, 18 viii. 28 xii. 49 xiv. 10.; and therefore the truer interpretation is, what Lightfoot and others give us, *viz.* 'That he spake as a prophet, having authority from God to deliver his message to them, and not as the scribes, who pretended only to deliver the traditions of their forefathers, and to teach them no more than what they had learned from Hillel, Shammai, Abtaliem,' &c.; *Whitby's Annotations.*

* He was an officer, commanding an hundred men. much of the same rank and station of one of our captains, and belonged to the iron legion, (as it was called) which was usually quartered in Judea; *Howell's History*, in the notes.

† Naim, or Nain, so called for the pleasantness of its situation, was a town of Galilee, about two leagues from Nazareth, and not so much from mount Tabor, between which and the city ran the river Kison. From our Saviour's meeting the funeral coming out of the gates, we may learn, that it was a custom among the Jews to bury their dead in the day-time, when the nearest friends and relations followed the corpse, which was usually carried in procession through the streets and public places, to the cemeteries, which were generally at a considerable distance from the city, because they looked upon their graves as places full of pollution; whereas we Christians, in hopes of a joyful resurrection, and upon presumption that many of those whose bodies are repositied in the earth are in a state of felicity in heaven, look upon these places with great respect and veneration, and accordingly have our tombs erected always very near, and sometimes within the body of our churches; *Whitby's Table of places*; and *Calmet's Commentary on Luke vii. 12.*

and publicly declared, that ^c a mighty Prophet was sprung up among them; and that God ^{*} had visited his people.

Upon the fame of this, and several other miracles, which our Saviour did daily, John the Baptist, who was still in prison, sent two of his disciples to enquire of him, † whether he himself was the promised Messiah, or some other person was to appear in that character? As our Lord was at that time working many miracles ‡, curing the

deaf,

^c Luke vii. 16.

^{*} The people of Naim do, in these words, acknowledge Jesus to be the Messiah, or that great prophet whom Moses had promised to the Jews: *The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a prophet, from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me, unto him shall ye hearken*, Deut. xviii. 15.; for they describe this prophet in the very same terms that Zacharias the father of John the Baptist, makes use of to denote the Messiah: *The Lord hath visited his people*, Luke i. 68.; *Calmet's Commentary*.

† The words in the text are, *Art thou he that should come, or rather, he that is coming?* For the prophecies of the Messiah in the Old Testament were so plain, and yet his person or name so unknown to the Jews, that they were wont to express it by some circumlocution, and more especially, by this of ἀπερχόμενος, *he that cometh*; for so he is termed, Matth. iii. 11, xxi. 9. Luke vii. 20. xix. 38. John xii. 13. and Heb. x. 37. &c.; and this name they gathered from Habakkuk, where he is called, *he that shall come*, chap. ii. 3.; and from Daniel, where he is styled, *he that cometh with the clouds of heaven*, chap. vii. 13.; *Hammond's* and *Whitby's Annotations*.

‡ If it be asked, How the seeing of these things done by our Saviour could be a sufficient argument to John's disciples, that he was, in truth the Messiah? The reply is, that the performance of these things was exactly answering the character which the prophet had given of the Messiah, viz. That, *at the coming of God to save them, the eyes of the blind should be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; that the lame should leap as an hart and the tongue of the dumb should sing*, Isa. xxxv. 4. &c.: And therefore, instead of giving them a direct answer, which might be liable to the old objection of his bearing record of himself, John viii. 13. our Saviour refers them to the miracles they saw him do; miracles of the same kind that were predicted of the Messiah, and then leaves it to their own master to draw the conclusions from thence; which was a method of conviction more short and strong, and withal more agreeable to our Saviour's modesty and great humility, than any long detail of arguments would have proved; *Poel's Annotations*; and *Calmet's Commentary*.

A. M.
4035, &c.
Ann Dom
31, &c.
from Matt.
xii. 1
Mark ii. : 3,
Luke vi. 1.
John v. 1.
to Matth.
xvii. 14.
Mark ix.
14 Luke
ix. 37.
John vii. 1.

His answer
to the Bap-
tist's disci-
ples, and
commen-
dation of
him.

A. M. 4035. &c.
 Ann Dom. 31, &c.
 from Matt. xii. 1.
 Mark ii. 23.
 Luke vi. 1.
 John v. 1.
 to Matth. x. vii. 14.
 Mark ix. 14.
 Luke ix. 37.
 John vii. 1.

deaf, the blind, the lame, &c. and instructing the people that were gathered about him; instead of giving a direct answer to their question, he bade them go, and report what they saw to their master. And having thus dismissed them, he began to discourse to the people concerning John, giving a large encomium of the austerity and holiness of his person, * the greatness of his function, and divinity of his commission; and hence taking occasion to blame the perverseness of the age, in rejecting both his and the Baptist's testimony, (though the Baptist was a man of a mortified deportment, and he a person of a free and affable behaviour, so that † nothing would please them,)

Matt. xi. f.
 Luke vii. 24.

* Maimonides observes, that though the Jews generally reckon eleven degrees of prophecy; yet two of these were something more sublime and excellent than ordinary prophecy. The one of these was what they call *gradus Moisaicus*, when the prophet had a familiar converse with God upon all occasions and the other, when he had his revelations, not from a dream or ecstasy, but an immediate dictate of the Holy Ghost. Of this sort was John the Baptist, who was plainly told by the Father, Matth. iii. 17. John xiii. 2; and, as plainly proclaimed it to others, that *Jesus was the Lamb of God*. Other prophets spoke of the coming of Christ, but then they did it in a dark and obscure manner. They saw him only at a distance, in a dream, or in a vision of the night, and couched their predictions under a veil of enigmatical phrases, but the Baptist spake of him openly and distinctly. He knew him; he was conversant with him; he pointed him out to the people; had, in short, the honour of baptizing him, and hearing the voice from heaven testifying of him, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased*. And, upon these accounts, we find him called a great and illustrious person, Luke i. 15. *one filled with the Holy Ghost*, and, by way of excellence the *Prophet of the Most High*, verse 76; *Hammond's Annotations*; and *Calmet's Commentary*.

† The words of our Saviour, to illustrate this, are these, — *We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned unto you, and ye have not lamented*, Matth. xi. 17. which seem to be a proverb, founded upon a custom among the Jewish children, to imitate what they saw done by others upon greater occasions, and particularly the custom in festivities, or funerals; when, in the former, as soon as the musician struck up a tune, the company began to dance to his pipe: and, in the latter, as soon as some old women had begun the mournful song, the rest followed, lamenting and beating their breasts. These the children were used to act and personate in the streets a play; and

them,) he proceeded to upbraid the several cities where most of his miracles had been wrought, viz. Chorazim, Bethsaida, and more especially Capernaum, with their obstinacy and impenitence; and having declared that the mysteries of the gospel-revelation were better adapted to the humble and modest than to the proud and worldly-wise, he concludes his discourse with an exhortation to such as were thus qualified to be his^f disciples, *Come unto me †, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest*, &c.

No sooner had he finished this discourse, but a rich Pharisee (whose name was Simon, ‡ invited him to dinner; but while he was at table there happened an incident somewhat remarkable: For a certain woman, who

and when one had begun the musician's part, and another the old woman's part, and the rest did not follow them in theirs, this gave occasion to the proverbial saying which our Saviour applies to the present purpose, in this sense, 'I and John have both of us invited you to enter into the kingdom of heaven, or to turn to God by repentance. John, by the austerity of his life, and I by my affability and courtesy, have endeavoured to recommend ourselves; but all to no purpose. You will neither mourn with him nor laugh with me; but for that very reason censure and revile our different behaviour, accounting him, for his reserved temper, no better than a melancholic kind of mad-man; and me, for my open and free conversation, a mere glutton and wine bibber;' *Hammond's Annotations*; and *Calnet's Commentary*.

^f Matth. xi 28

† *To come unto Christ* in the phrase of the New Testament, is to believe in him, and to become one of his disciples; and this invitation our Saviour gives to all mankind in general, and to the Jews in particular. To all mankind forasmuch as all (without the knowledge of Christ) are heavy laden with the burden of their sins, and the calamities incident to life: are surrounded with a cloud of ignorance, and held in bondage through the fear of death and to the Jews in particular, as they, under their dispensation, were oppressed with a load of ceremonies, *a yoke which neither they nor their fathers were able to bear*, Acts xv 10 besides the additional weight which the Pharisees laid upon them, by their traditions, *heavy burdens, and grievous to be born* Matth. xxiii. 4; *Whitby's Annotations*; and *Calnet's Commentary*

‡ Is it not a little strange, than any interpreters should ever imagine, that this is the same story with what we find related

A. M.
4035. &c.
A. Dom.
31, &c.
from Matt.
xii 1.
Mark ii 23.
Luke vi. 1.
John v 1.
to Matt.
xvii. 14.
Mark ix 14.
Luke ix. 37.
John vii 1.
Luke vii.
36 H s a:
not
pologizing
for the wo-
man in Si-
mon's
house, and
absolving
her from
her sins.

A. M. not long before † had been noted for a lewd liver, came
 4035. &c. into
 Ann Dom

31, &c.

from

Matth. xii.

1. Mark ii.

23. Luke

vi. 1. John

v. 1 to

Matth. xviii.

14. Mark

ix. 14.

Luke ix.

37. John

vii. 1.

from

Matth. xii.

1. Mark ii.

23. Luke

vi. 1. John

v. 1 to

Matth. xviii.

14. Mark

ix. 14.

Luke ix.

37. John

vii. 1.

from

Matth. xii.

1. Mark ii.

23. Luke

vi. 1. John

v. 1 to

Matth. xviii.

14. Mark

ix. 14.

Luke ix.

37. John

vii. 1.

from

Matth. xii.

1. Mark ii.

23. Luke

vi. 1. John

v. 1 to

Matth. xviii.

14. Mark

ix. 14.

Luke ix.

37. John

vii. 1.

from

Matth. xii.

1. Mark ii.

23. Luke

vi. 1. John

v. 1 to

Matth. xviii.

14. Mark

ix. 14.

Luke ix.

37. John

vii. 1.

from

Matth. xii.

in Matth. xxvi. Mark xiv. and John xii. since the histories agree scarce in any thing, unless it be in bringing the alabaster box of ointment, and anointing our Saviour's feet, which in those countries, especially at great entertainments, was no uncommon thing. But now the anointing in the other evangelists was done at Bethany, within two miles of Jerusalem; this in St Luke in Galilee; that in the house of one Simon the leper; this in the house of one Simon a Pharisee; that but a little before our Saviour's passion; this a considerable time before it: at that, Judas was offended for the waste of the ointment; at this Simon for the woman's touching our Saviour: upon that occasion our Lord vindicates the woman from one head of argument, and upon this from another. So that all circumstances make it plain, that these were different actions. done by different persons, at different times; *Pool's Annotations.*

† Who this woman was, the gospel no where tells. We read indeed of three persons who by several evangelists are said to have anointed our Lord's head and feet. viz. Mary Magdalene, Mary the sister of Lazarus, and this other woman, whom St Luke calls a sinner: And some commentators make these three to be one and the same person. It is to be observed, however, that the sister of Lazarus is all along represented as a person of great sobriety and virtue, who always lived at Bethany, was none of our Lord's attendants, nor ever came into Galilee; and consequently was a woman distinct from Mary Magdalene, who was of his retinue, Luke viii. 2. and from this other woman who anointed his feet in Simon's house: But whether this Mary Magdalene, and this woman here called a sinner, might not be the same person, is not so easy to determine. The characteristic of Magdalene is, that she was the person out of whom our Lord had cast seven devils; but then if the ejection of these devils be understood (as some will have it) in an allegorical sense, the words will well enough suit with the sinner in St Luke; or suppose they were real devils, the ejection of them might be some time before her coming into Simon's house, and (as our Saviour's vindication of her seems to imply) her reformation consequent thereupon, though Simon knew nothing of it. For these reasons some have imagined, that the sinner in St Luke and Mary Magdalene were both the same person; and that she was called Magdalene from the town and castle of Magdal, where her husband, who had been a man of great distinction, but then dead, had lately had his habitation. It must not be dissembled however, that the most general and prevailing opinion is, that these were two different and distinct women; *Calmet's Dissert. sur les trois Maries; and Hammond's Annotations.*

into the house, and † throwing herself at the feet of Jesus, washed them with the tears which flowed from her eyes, and then, having wiped them with her hair, she kissed them, and anointed them with very precious ointment †.

Simon, who still retained something of the censorious spirit of his sect, seeing this woman thus busy in expressing her love and veneration for Jesus, began to think within himself, that || he could not possibly be a prophet, other

wife
A. M.
4035. &c.
Ann Dom
31. &c.
from Matt.
xii. 1.
Mark ii. 23.
Luke vi. 1.
John v. 1.
to Matt.
xvii. 14.
Mark ix. 14.
Luke ix.

† The manner of the eastern people was to lie upon a kind of bed or couch while they were at meat; to put off their sandals before they lay down; and to have their servants and domestics stand behind at their feet: so that this woman wanted not an opportunity to express her devotion to our Lord, while he was in this posture: *Beaufobre's Annotations.*

† That it was a customary thing among the ancients, especially at great entertainments, to use ointments and costly perfumes, appears from several authorities. The Psalmist plainly informs us, that this was the custom of the Jews, when in acknowledgment of God's great bounty to him, he declares, *Thou hast prepared a table for me; thou hast anointed my head with oil, and my cup shall be full.* Psal. xxiii. 5. The Scholiast upon Aristophanes acquaints us with the same custom among the Greeks, when he makes it a rule that they who invite to an entertainment should bring forth to their guests crowns and ointments, *σεβας, & μύρα παρηίδεσθαι*. And that among the Romans the like usage prevailed, is evident from that sharp, jocular epigram in Martial:

Unguentum fateor bonum dedisti

Convivis heri, sed nihil scidisti.

Res falsa est, bene olere, et esurire.

Qui non cœnat, et unigitur, Fabulle,

Hic verò mihi mortuus videtur.

Lib. 3.

The general custom indeed, upon these occasions, was, to anoint the head, and very seldom the feet: But, besides that the latter was a token of more humility, and no less esteem in this woman, she could not perhaps have an opportunity of coming at our Saviour's head, without giving some disturbance to the company; *Hammond's Annotations.*

|| Though the Jewish religion permitted, harlots of their own nation, to enjoy all the privileges of other women, except that their oblations were rejected as impure, yet the Pharisees, who pretended to a greater degree of sanctity than others, would not admit them to civil usage, or the common benefits of society, and thought religion itself, and the honour of every prophet, concerned in this preciseness. This was the reason of

A. M.
4035, &c.
Ann Dom.
31. &c.
from Matt
xii 1.
Mark ii. 23
Luke vi. 1
John v. 1.
to Matth.
xviii. 14.
Mark xi.
14 Luke
ix 37.
John vii 1

wife he would have known the woman to be infamous, and consequently not suffered her to touch him : But our Saviour, who well understood Simeon's thoughts, proposed to him a parable of a certain creditor, who had two debtors, one of which owed him ten times as much as the other, but because both of them were insolvent, he frankly forgave them both ; and then, gaining from him a confession, that the debtor to whom the larger sum was forgiven would in gratitude be bound to love the creditor most, he turned to the woman, and (by way of application) not only apologized both for her behaviour and his own, but reproached his host likewise, for having omitted some instances of respect and civility which this contemptible woman (as he esteemed her) had abundantly supplied. And therefore, in return for such uncommon kindness, he gave her a full pardon and absolution of her sins, which some in the company seemed to resent, as an invasion of the divine prerogative ; but that gave him no manner of uneasiness.

Luke viii. 1.
His curing
a demoniac
at Caper-
naum,
whereupon
the Phari-
sees blas-
pheme, and
he shar-ly
reproves
them.

Upon his leaving Naim, he made a progress, for some months, round other parts of Galilee, accompanied with his apostles, and several devout women, whom he cured of sundry diseases, and who, in gratitude, attended his person, and, out of their own substance, administered † to

Simon's making this objection within himself: But therein he draws three false conclusions: 1st, That had Jesus been a prophet, he must have known what the woman was ; as if prophets knew every thing, and were able to look into the secrets of the heart. 2dly, That as this woman was a sinner, our Saviour should not have suffered her to touch him ; as if the external touch of a person engaged in any vicious course, could communicate pollution to one that was innocent. And, 3dly, That this woman, whom he knew to be a sinner some time before, was still in the same condition ; as if it were not in the power of God at any time to touch the heart, and in a moment to inspire sincere repentance ; *Calmel's Commentary.*

† It was customary, says St Jerom. on Matth. xxvii 55. among the Jews, for women, and especially for widows, to minister necessities to their teachers ; and this, without any scandal or imputation upon their honour. Our Saviour lays it down as a general rule, that *the labourer is worthy of his hire*, Luke x. 7 : and the apostle accounts it no more than justice, that they who sow to others spiritual things should be allowed to reap their carnal, 1 Cor. ix. 11. Of what condition or quality

to his necessities: Till returning, at length, to his own city, Capernaum, such multitudes of people, upon the rumour of his being come again, resorted to him, that neither he, nor his disciples, could find time to eat. *But his meat was to do the will of God*, by healing the sick, and relieving the oppressed; and therefore, as soon as a poor demoniac, both blind and dumb, was brought before him, he immediately restored him both to his speech and eyesight, insomuch that all who saw it were greatly astonished, and, with a general voice, declared, that the person who did such wonderful works could be no other than the promised Messiah.

The Pharisees, however, and doctors of the law, who came from Jerusalem, gave another turn to this miracle. They ascribed it to the power of the devil *, even to Beelzebub †, the chief of the devils; and therefore our

A. M.
4035, &c.
Ann Dom
31, &c.
from
Mat. xii. 1.
Mark ii. 13.
Luke vi. 1.
John v. 1.
to Mat. x.
xvii. 14.
Mark ix.
14. Luke
ix. 37.
John vii. 1.

Match. xii.
11. Mark
iii. 22.
Luke xi 15.

‘ Blessed

quality these women were that attended our Lord, we are not told. They might be virgins, widows, or wives, who had an allowance for themselves from their husbands: However, it could be no injustice done their families, to give unto him, who was Lord of all, that they and their husbands possessed; and who, *though he was rich, yet, for our sakes, became poor, that we, through his poverty, might be rich*, 2 Cor. viii 9.; *Whitby's* and *Poole's Annotations*.

* That which made the Pharisees thus calumniate our Saviour's miracles, was their finding the people induced by them to believe that he was the son of David Mat. xii 23. which was but another word for the Messiah, the King of the Jews. For, though they might have some apprehensions, that if this belief obtained, it might possibly bring the power of the Romans upon them, John xi. 48.; yet their chief fear was, that the greatness of his miracles, and excellence of his doctrine would put an end to their credit and authority among the people, since they were conscious to themselves, that they could not vie with him in either; *Whitby's Annotations*.

† By several passages in the gospel it seems evident, that the Jews, at this time, had a notion of a kind of empire, and subordination among the infernal powers, and that the prince of this empire was called *Beelzebub*. *Beelzebub* signifies properly the *God of flies*; but why a name of so mean an import should denote the head of the apostate angels, is not so easy a matter to determine, unless we will admit of this conjecture, viz. That as the people of Ekron had an idol which they styled *Beelsamen*, i. e. the *God of heaven*, by other nations called *Jupiter Olympius*, the Jews who used to give nick-names, or names

of

A. M. 4035. &c. Ann Dom 31, &c. from Matt. xii 1. Mark ii. 23. Luke vi. 1. John v. 1. to Marc. xvii. 14. Mark ix. 14. Luke ix. 37. John vii 1.

* Blessed Saviour, by the comparison of a kingdom, or house, divided against itself, (which is the readiest way to bring it to desolation,) shews the absurdity of their allegations, since, by that means, the devil would take the most effectual course to destroy his own empire. Nay, he argues from their own pretensions of having certain allowed exorcists †, among them, that evil spirits might be cast out by the finger of God; that, when they were apparently so, it was very manifest, that the kingdom

of contempt, to all false gods, called it sometimes *Beelzebub*, or the *God fly*, because these Heathens worshipped it under the figure of that insect, and sometimes *Beelzebub*, or the *God of ordure*, because some sort of flies delight to feed on excrements. However this be. it is certain, that the apostles, in several places of their writings, do seem to insinuate, that among the apostate spirits, there was one superior to the rest, whom therefore they call *the prince of darkness*, Luke xxii. 53. *the prince of this world*, John xii 31. and *the prince of the power of the air*, Eph. ii. 2. who, in the days of Tobit, went under the name of *Asmodeus*, chap. iii. 8. and is now by the Jews generally called *Sammael*, and by the Christians, *Lucifer*; *Beausobre's Annotations*, and *Calmet's Commentary*.

* The argument which our Saviour employs against the Jews upon this occasion is what we call *ad hominem*. He supposes, as they did, that among evil spirits there was a form of government, which was to last unto the end of the world, and in it a certain subordination, which made it subsist; and from this principle he argues, — 'That it was impossible, that an empire divided against itself should last long; incongruous to think, that a prince, who knew his own interest, would send part of his forces to engage his own generals, and compel them to surrender to the enemy, what they had lately taken from them; and therefore a thing utterly incredible, that the prince of the devils should give orders to other inferior devils to quit the bodies which they had taken possession of; and consequently, that he should expel any in the name or by the authority of Beelzebub;' *Calmet's Commentary*.

† That it was customary among the Jews to cast out devils by the invocation of the name of the Most High, we may learn from Justin Martyr. who, in his dialogue with Trypho, tells him, 'that if any Jew exorcised a devil in the name of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, perhaps he would obey him;' from what Irenæus tells us, *viz.* 'That by the invocation of the name of God, even before the advent of our Lord, men were saved from evil spirits, and all kind of demons;' and, from what Origen (*contra Cels.*) affirms, *viz.* 'That the name of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, being

‘ kingdom of God, or the Messiah, was come among
 ‘ them ; that obstinately to resist the evidence of such mi-
 ‘ racles, or to ascribe them to a diabolical power, was that
 ‘ sin against the Holy Ghost, which is of a nature unpar-
 ‘ donable ; and that, since they had been so impious, as
 ‘ to blaspheme the Holy Spirit by which he wrought them,
 ‘ nothing less could be expected than that the devils e-
 ‘ jected by him, finding no where among the Heathens
 ‘ such desirable habitations of rest and contentment, as a-
 ‘ mong them, would endeavour to return, with several
 ‘ others worse than themselves, and, by their prodigious
 ‘ wickedness and obstinate infidelity, finding them more
 ‘ prepared than ever to receive them, would there take up
 ‘ their settled abode ; and having made them more incre-
 ‘ dulous and obdurate, more impure and wicked, more
 ‘ hypocritical and blasphemous than they were before,
 ‘ would bring upon them too a more lamentable destruc-
 ‘ tion.’

All this however hindered not the scribes and Pharisees
 from demanding of our Saviour some new sign or miracle
 in evidence of his mission; but as he had given them a
 sufficient number of these already, he only referred them
 to one, that would not come to pass till after his death,
 namely, that of Jonas, whose deliverance from the
 whale’s * belly, after three days confinement was an
 eminent type of his resurrection, after as long a conti-
 nuance † of his body in the bowels of the earth: And
 thence

‘ being used by the Jews, in the incantation of devils did great
 ‘ miracles.’ And if this was a common practice among the
 Jews, then will the force of our Saviour’s argument be this :
 ‘ You make no doubt, but that your exorcists, whose name
 ‘ of God, do eject devils by virtue of that name ; and how
 ‘ partial is it then in you, to pass an unjust censure upon me,
 ‘ in whom you see far greater evidences of the finger of God,
 ‘ in my casting out all manner of evil spirits, and healing all
 ‘ kinds of diseases ?’ *Whitby’s Annotations.*

* The word in the original signifies not a *whale*, but any
large fish ; and some naturalists are of opinion, that it was not
 a whale, whose gullet is too narrow for that purpose, but ra-
 ther what the Greeks call the *Lamia*, or *Dog-fish*, (as we shew-
 ed elsewhere) whose throat is more capacious, that swallowed
 up Jonah ; *Vide vol. 4 p. 222.*

† But how can our Saviour be said to have continued as
 long in the grave, as Jonah did in the whale’s belly, when
 there were no more than two nights, and one whole day, be-
 tween

A. M.
 4035, &c.
 Ann Dom
 31. &c.
 from Matt.
 xii. 1. Mark
 i. 23. Luke
 vi. 1. John
 v. 1.
 Matth. xvii.
 14. Mark ix.
 14. Luke
 ix. 37
 John vi. 1.

A. M. thence he took occasion to remind them, 'that the in-
 4035 &c. habitants of Nineveh †, a Pagan city, and also the
 Ann Dom 'queen of Sheba † should rise up in judgment || against
 31, &c. 'that generation, and condemn it, because the former re-
 from Mat. 'pented at the preaching of Jonas, and the latter took
 xii. 1. Mark 'a vast journey to partake of the benefits of Solomon's
 ii. 23. Luke 'wisdom; whereas they refused to hearken to one,
 vi. 1. John 'who
 v. 1. to
 Matt. xvii.
 14. Mark
 ix. 14 Luke
 ix 37. John
 vii. 1.

tween his death and his resurrection? Now, for the solution of this, we must observe. 1st, That the Hebrews began their computation of a natural day from the evening or night preceding; so that, from one sun-set to another sun-set, they reckoned a complete day, even as Moses does. when he says, *The evening and the morning were the first day*, Gen i. 5. 2dly, That it is a common thing with them, as well as other nations, to put part of a day for the whole; so that, whatever is done in any part of the day, is properly enough said to be done on that day: And, 3dly, That they usually reckon that to be done in so many days or so many days and nights, which begins in any part of the first, and ends in any part of the last day. Now, allowing this manner of computation, and reckoning that the first day began on Thursday at sun set, and ended upon Friday at sun-set; since our Saviour died on Friday about three in the afternoon, by putting a part for the whole, here we have one day. Saturday is allowed on all hands to be another; and, since the third day began on Saturday at sun-set, and our Saviour rose on the morning following, that part of the day being likewise put for the whole, is fairly computed for the third. The Hebrew child, according to law, was to be circumcised the eighth day, but then the day of its birth, and of its circumcision, were both counted; and, in like manner, if we reckon the day on which Christ died for one, and that on which he rose for another, including withal the night belonging to the former, we may properly enough say, that, in imitation of the prophet Jonah, 'he was three days and three nights in the heart of the earth;' *Whitby's and Hammond's Annotations*, and *Bishop Kidder's Demonstration*, lib. 1 c. 8.

† This city is generally supposed to have been built by Nimrod, was situate upon the river Tigris, and famous once for being the metropolis of the first, i. e. the Assyrian empire; *Well's Geography of the New Testament*.

‡ Sheba, or Saba, is a province of Arabia Felix, lying to the south of Judea, and on the extreme part of the continent, and being bounded by the ocean, is therefore said to be *the utmost part of the earth*; *Well's Geography of the New Testament*.

|| This is spoken in allusion to a custom among the Jews and Romans, which was, for the witnesses to rise from their seats, when they accused criminals, or gave any evidence against them; *Beaufobre's Annotations*.

‘ who was incontestibly * greater than either Jonas or Solomon.’

A M.
4035, &c.
Ann Dom
31. &c.
from Mat.
xii 1. Mark
ii. 23. Luke
vi. 1. John
v. 1. 10
Matt. xvii.
14. Mark
ix 14.
L ke ix.
37. John
vi. 1.

While he was continuing his discourse in this manner, word was brought that his mother † and some other kinsfolk were at the door, desiring to speak with him; (for fearing either that he might be too much transported by his ministry, or grow faint for want of eating, or be endangered by the throng, they came to get him away) but being dissatisfied with their unseasonable interruption, he took occasion to inform the audience, ‘ that all worldly relations were of less consideration than the ties of duty and religion;’

* Since God had promised Solomon, that as there was none like him before him, so after him none should arise like him for wisdom, 1 Kings iii. 12. our Saviour’s declaring that in this respect he was greater than Solomon, must be plainly avowing himself to be more than man; *Whitby’s Annotations.*

† The words in the text are, *His mother and his brethren*, Matth. xii 46. ; but as the word *brethren* (according to the language of the Jews, Gen. xxix 12. Levit. x. 4.) is of great latitude, these brothers are supposed to be either Joseph’s sons by a former wife, and so our Saviour’s brothers-in-law or the children of Mary the wife of Cleophas, and so his cousin Germans. There is, indeed, a tradition in the church, that before his espousing the Virgin Mary, Joseph had another wife, whose name was Ischa, by whom he had six children, four sons, James, Joseph, Simon, and Jude, and two daughters, whose names, some say, were Esther and Thamar, others Mary and Salome. But whoever compares Matth. xiii. 55.—xxvii. 56. Mark xv. 40. and John xix. 25. together, will find that the four persons there said to be our Saviour’s brothers, were the sons of Mary the wife of Cleophas, (or Alpheus, for the name is all one,) and sister to the Blessed Virgin: and so these brothers of his (as we said) were no more than his cousin Germans. Others, however, strenuously maintain the former opinion, viz. That Mary the mother of Jesus was their mother, i. e. their stepmother, and they consequently his brothers-in-law; and that, 1st, Because this opinion retains the proper signification of the word *brothers*, in which the Jews always seem to use it. when they speak of our Lord’s brothers and sisters: and, 2^{dly}, Because it agrees with the sense of antiquity, which, ever before St Jerom’s time, (says the learned Pearson,) looked upon them as the brothers of our Lord, who lived with his mother, and are therefore so frequently found together, Matth. xii. 46. John ii. 12. ; *Calmet’s Commentary*, and *Beausobre’s* and *Whitby’s Annotations*,

A. M. 4035, &c. Ann Dom 31. &c. from Matt. xii. i. Mark ii. 23. Luke vi. i. John v. 1. to Matt. xvii. 14. Mark ix. 37. John vii. 1.

gion; that the names * of mother and brother, which are sanctified by the laws of God and nature, were made much more sacred, when a spiritual kindred does super-vene; and so turning to his disciples, he declared, 'that they were his truest relations who heard the word of God, and practised it.'

The same day he went out of the house where he commonly abode, and, for the greater conveniency of teaching the people, repaired to the sea-shore, where, being followed by the same multitudes, to avoid the throng, he went on board a vessel, and from thence taught them in parables, (an usual way of instruction among the Jews, but what he had not practised before,) thereby to engage the attention, and accommodate himself to the capacity of those that heard him. By the parable of the sower, he represented the different successes of the gospel, according to the different dispositions of its hearers; by the tares growing among the good seed, the mixture of the wicked and Godly under the same profession of Christianity; by the grain of mustard seed, and the little piece of leaven, the wonderful increase and propagation of the gospel from small beginnings; by the treasure in the field, and the pearl of great price, the inestimable benefits that would accrue to the true professors of religion; but that the profession of it would include a mixt multitude, and be therefore like a net cast into the sea, which incloses fishes of all kinds, some good and some bad, the good to be preserved, but the bad cast away. This is the explication which

* We have another speech of our Saviour's much of the same import with this. For when a certain woman in the company, upon hearing his excellent doctrine, broke out into this exclamation, *Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked!* his reply is, *Yea, rather blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it,* Luke xi. 27. 28. *for whosoever shall do the will of my Father who is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother,* Matth. xii. 50.; which texts do not derogate any thing from the honour truly due to the Blessed Virgin, as the mother of the Messiah; but only shew the folly of some who exalt her above Christ, whom, considered only as his mother. Christ himself seems here to set beneath every true believer; though, considered as a believer likewise, she has a just title to pre-eminence; and it is by that she is infinitely more happy than if she had only been his mother according to the flesh; *Chrysoft. hom. 45.; Calmet's Commentary, and Pool's Annotations.*

which our Lord gave his disciples of these several parables; and when, by their answer, he perceived that they understood them all, he concluded his discourse with one similitude more, viz. That ³ every gospel-teacher ought to resemble a well furnished house-keeper *, who brings all things out of his repository, both old and new, according to the occasions of his guests.

He had not continued long in Capernaum, before he resolved to cross the lake or sea of Galilee, and to that purpose had ordered his disciples to prepare a vessel for him: But just as he was going on board, a certain scribe † came, and offered to attend him wherever he went;

but
 Matth. viii.
 18, Luke
 ix. 57.

³ Matth. xiii. 52.

* And what this house-keeper was in his own family, that should every minister of the gospel be in the church of Christ. He should be thoroughly instructed in the word of God, and capable of amassing a plentiful provision of all knowledge, both sacred and prophane. To bring out of his treasure, or store-house, things new and old, was a kind of proverbial saying among the Hebrews, and denoted a man's giving a plentiful or liberal entertainment to his friends, and such as came about him. And therefore, as the householder, if a man of substance and sufficiency, of a large stock, and as large a mind, will entertain his friends and guests with plenty, and variety of provisions, answerable to the difference of men's palates, as well as to the difference of the seasons: so our gospel-scribe, or teacher, in the entertainment of his spiritual guests, is not always to set before them only the main substantials of religion, whether for belief or practice, but, as the matter shall require, to add also illustration to the one, and enforcement to the other, sometimes persuading, sometimes terrifying; and accordingly addressing himself to the afflicted and desponding with gospel lenitives, and to the hard and obstinate, with legal corrosives; and, since the relish of all is not the same, he is to apply to the vulgar with plain familiar similitudes, and to the learned, with greater choice of language, and coolness of argument, and so suit his discourses to the various circumstances, tempers, and apprehensions of his hearers; *Calmet's Commentary*; and *South's Sermons*, vol 4.

† What might possibly be the motive of this scribe's offering to attend our Saviour, the conjectures of commentators have been different. Some think, that he did it with a sincere desire to become his disciple; others, with a design to turn spy upon him; some, out of a spirit of vanity, to distinguish himself, by being a retainer to a master in so great repu-

A. M. but when he understood, that no temporal emolument was
 4085, &c. to be obtained by such attendance, he very probably re-
 ANN. DOM. tracted. A disciple of his own at the same time desired
 31, &c. leave † to bury his father before he went along with him;
 from Matt leave † to bury his father before he went along with him;
 xii 1. Mark but he commanded him to follow him, and to leave such
 ii. 23. Luke offices to the children ‡ of this world; and, when an-
 vi 1. John other
 w. 1. to
 Matt xviii

14. Mark. tation among the people; others, out of a principle of self-
 ix 14. Luke interest, that he might obtain some post of honour and advan-
 ix 37. John tage, upon our Lord's advancement to his kingdom. This,
 vii. 1. indeed, seems to be the most probable ground of his resolution;
 Matth. viii. and accordingly, the design of our Saviour's answer is to dis-
 23 Mark courage him from being his disciple upon such secular views,
 ix. 30. *The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son*
 Luke vii. *of Man hath not where to lay his own head,* Matth viii. 20.; and
 24. therefore much less any accommodation or prospect of prefer-
 ment for his followers; *Calmet's Commentary*, and *Whitby's An-*
notations.

† Some are of opinion, that the disciple who requested this was St Philip, who was the first that adjoined himself to Jesus, and that his father was not actually dead, but only grown so very old, that he could not live long; and therefore the purport of his address to Christ is, 'That, for the small remainder of his father's life, he might be permitted to live with him, but that, after he had paid his last offices to him, he would not fail to return again, and devote himself entirely to his service.' But others understand the words in a literal sense; *Calmet's Commentary.*

‡ The words of the text are,—*Let the dead bury their dead,* Matth. viii. 22. which is a form of speech common in all sorts of authors, when in the same place they use the same words twice, though very frequently in different senses. Thus the Psalmist speaking of God, says, *With the froward thou shalt shew thyself froward,* Psal. xviii. 26. even as Moses introduces God speaking of himself, *If you walk contrary to me, I will also walk contrary to you,* Lev. xxvi. 23. 24. where the words *froward* and *contrary*, as they relate to God, denote the punishments which he intended to bring upon the obstinate, and are the rather used, because the same words went before. And, in like manner, *Let the dead bury their dead, but follow thou me,* may signify, *Let others bury the dead; thou hast work of more consequence to do.* It must not be dissembled, however, that by the dead, both sacred and prophane authors do frequently mean, not only those who in a natural sense are dead, but those likewise who in a spiritual sense are so, by being alienated from the life of God, and dead in trespasses and sins. Thus Clemens

other was for taking leave of his family, and disposing of his effects before he went, our Saviour let him know, ^{h 4035. &c.} *that whoever laid his hand on the plough †, and looked back, was not fit for the kingdom of God.* ^{Ann Dom 31, &c.}

While the ship was under sail, and Jesus asleep in the stern, there arose a most terrible storm, so violent and impetuous that the whole ship was almost swallowed up by the waves. Hereupon his disciples, in great consternation awoke him; and when he arose, at his rebuking the waves, they obeyed his command, and immediately composed themselves into a profound calm †, to the no small astonishment of every one that saw it. ^{xiii. 1. Mark ii. 13. Luke vi. 1. John v. 1. Matt. x. 1. Mark ix. 14. Luke ix. 17. John vii. 1.}

The Allays the storm at sea, and cures two demoniacs outrageously mad. of Alexandria tells us, that the philosophy of the Barbarians called those dead, who deserted their doctrines, and subjected their minds to sensual pleasures, which Philo calls the death of the soul, entombed in passions and all manner of wickedness. And therefore the full import of our Saviour's words must be, 'Let those who are unconcerned for the things of God, and unfit to engage in promoting them perform such offices which they can do, as well as others; but thou who hast begun to follow me, and to attend upon the kingdom of God, go on with resolution, and without allowing thyself any vacation from that work:?' Hereby teaching us, that they who are called to the preaching of the gospel, and the salvation of souls, should not suffer any earthly business, which may be done as well by others who are unfit to be employed in spirituals, to give them the least impediment or molestation; *Hammond's and Whitby's Annotations.*

^h Luke ix. 62.

† *To put the hand to the plough*, is a proverbial saying, not only among the Greeks and Hebrews, but many other nations, and denotes, in general the beginning of any enterprize. This our Saviour applies to spiritual husbandry; and thereby gives us to understand, that as he who undertakes to plow, should not look behind him, for fear of making his furrows crooked or unequal; so he that engages in the ministry of the gospel, should not suffer himself to be incumbered with much serving about other matters, but, in the language of the apostle, *forgetting those things that are behind and reaching forth unto those things which are before, press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Jesus Christ*; Phil. iii. 23, 15; *Whitby's Annotations*; and *Calmet's Commentary*.

† The stilling of the raging of the sea was so peculiar a prerogative of God, Psal. lxxxix. 9. and cvii. 25, 29. that it is not at all to be wondered that our Saviour's disciples should be convinced of a divine power residing in him who was able to do this with the breath of his command; *Whitby's Annotations.*

A. M. The next morning, as our Lord landed on the east side
 4035, &c. of the lake, in that part of the province of Trachonitis *,
 Ann Dom which is called *the country of the Gadarens* †, two demo-
 51, &c. niacs || most grievously distracted, with some poor rags a-
 from Matt. xii, 1. bout

Mark ii. 23.

Luke vi. 1.

John v. 1.

20M att.

xvii 14.

Ma k ix 14.

Luke ix. 37.

John vii 1.

Matth. viii.

28, Mark

v 1. Luke

viii. 26.

* This country, which is so called by the Greeks from its rough and craggy mountains, together with Ituræa, made in our Saviour's time one tetrarchy *i. e.* one fourth part or rather division (for they were not equal parts) of the kingdom of Herod the Great when he died. It was anciently called *Argob*, Deut. iii 13. and, according to the best account, is bounded to the east by Arabia Deserta; to the west, by Batanæa; to the south by Ituræa; and to the north, by the country of Damascus: And as it was a province full of rocky hills, which served for an harbour to a great number of thieves and robbers, it often found employment for Herod the Great (as we may see in the history of Josephus) to expel them; *Wells's Geography of the New Testament*; and *Whithy's Table*.

† This, in St Matthew, is called the country of the Gergesens, because it lay in the neighbourhood of the two cities Gadara and Gergesa, which were both situated within the district of Decapolis. Gadara, which took its name from the tribe of Gad, (to whom it fell by lot in the division of the land,) was a famous city beyond Jordan, the capital of Paræa, (as Josephus De bello, lib. 5. c. 3. tells us,) and stood eastward of the sea of Tiberias, about sixty furlongs from the shore. Gergesa was a place of some importance likewise, according to the same historian; and the adjacency of these two towns made the evangelists call the country that lay between them sometimes by one name, and sometimes by another; *Wells's Geography of the New Testament*.

|| There is some difference between the evangelists in their account of this cure: For whereas St Mark, chap. v. 2. and St Luke, chap. viii. 28. take notice only of one demoniac; St Matthew, chap. viii. 28. makes mention of two. Now, to reconcile this seeming difference, Dr Lightfoot ingeniously conjectures that one of these two was a Gergesen, and a Jew, and so in casting the devil out of him, our Lord did no more than what he had frequently done in Judea; but the other a Gadaren, *i. e.* one of an Heathen city, as Josephus testifies; for which reason St Mark and St Luke take chiefly notice of him, as a more remarkable instance, because he and the Syrophœnician woman were the only two Heathens we read of that our Saviour cured. But there is a farther reason for the evangelist's taking notice of one rather than the other, and that is,—That the one, in his behaviour, was more remarkable than the other; was possessed of an unclean spirit, called himself *legion*, and

bout them, came running towards him, and fell at his feet and worshipped him. Hideous spectacles were they both; but one, much fiercer than the other, made dismal outcries both day and night, and cut his flesh with sharp stones; and though he had been often bound with fetters and chains, yet he as often broke them to pieces, ranging (with his companion) among the rocks * and tombs, and so very furious and outrageous, that no traveller durst pass that way. Upon their approach to Jesus, the devils (who spake by their mouths) declared him to be the Son of God, and expressed their fear of his being come to † torment them before the time. They acknowledged their number to be vastly great, and (if he cast them out of the possessed persons) implored him to suffer them to enter into a herd of swine that were feeding on the mountains not far off. Accordingly he permitted them: Whereupon the whole herd, to the number of two thousand, ran violently upon the rocks, and casting themselves head-long into the lake, were all drowned, and utterly lost.

A. M.
4035, &c.
Ann Dom
31, &c.
from Matt.
xii. 1
Mark ii. 23.
Luke vi. 1.
John v. 1.
to Matt. i.
xviii. 14
Mark ix.
14. Luke
ix. 37.
John vii. 1.

The

and could not be bound with fetters or chains; went about naked, and cutting himself with stones; and when he was cured, distinguished himself, by desiring to follow Christ: Circumstances all which St Matthew omits, but St Mark and St Luke have particularly related, and, upon these accounts, might very likely think, that he fell more properly under their consideration than the other; *Whitby's* and *Beaufobre's Annot.*

* The tombs, which the evangelists here mention, are said to be in the mountains, and in the wilderness: For the custom of the Jews was, to have their tombs, like so many little cells, cut out in the sides of caverns, and hollow parts of rocks and mountains, at some distance from their towns, and usually in very lonely and desert places; into which it was usual for the devils to compel those whom they possessed, in order to confirm men in the vain persuasion, that the souls of those who died in any crime, were, after death, turned into devils; *Hammond's Annotations.*

† St Jerom, upon this passage now before us, is apt to imagine, that as slaves, who have a long while run from their master, no sooner see his face, but they bethink themselves of the punishment which they have deserved; so the devils, finding our Saviour upon earth, thought, at first sight, that he was come to judge and condemn them; and therefore they ask, *Art thou come hither to torment us before the time?* i. e. before the time of the last judgment, when they expect no other than to be eternally punished, or (as the Scripture expresses it) *to be cast into the lake of fire and brimstone for ever*; *Calmet's Commentary.*

A. M.
4035, &c
Ann Dom.
31, &c.
from Matt.
xii. 1.
Mark ii. 23
Luke vi. 1.
John v. 1.
to Matth
xvii. 14.
Mark ix.
14. Luke
ix. 37.
John vii. 1.

He leaves
Gadara.

Mat. xi 18.
Mark v. 22.
Luke viii.
41. And
returning
to Caper-
naum, cures
the woman
of her
bloody flux.

The keepers of the swine fled in the utmost fright, and reported this strange accident in the city of Gadara and the neighbouring villages, which brought great multitudes to the place, where they found the man (who had been the more furious of the two) sitting at our Saviour's feet, clothed, and in his perfect senses. But, whether it was that they took amiss the destruction of the swine, or thought themselves unworthy of his divine presence, so it was that they intreated our Lord to depart out of their country; which accordingly he did; * but, instead of permitting the man (out of whom he had cast the most devils) to go along with him, as he desired, he ordered him ⁱ to return to his house, and his friends, and there to declare what wonderful things the Lord had done for him.

As soon as our Lord had repassed the lake, and was returned to Capernaum, the people came flocking about him as usual; and, while he was teaching them, one Jarius †, a chief ruler of the synagogue, falling prostrate at his feet, humbly besought him to come and cure his daughter, who was at the point of death; not doubting but that, if he laid his hands upon her, she would instantly recover. The forwardness of the ruler's faith claimed our Saviour's compassion and assistance; and therefore he immediately rose, and followed him: But, as he was on the way, and pressed with great throngs of people, a certain

* One reason, as some imagine, why this man desired to be with Christ, was his fear lest the devil, at his departure, might seize upon him again; and it was partly to avoid the suspicion of vain glory, whereof our Lord might have given some umbrage had he carried about with him all those upon whom his greatest miracles were wrought, and partly to shew, that in his absence he was able to protect such as believe and trust in him from the malice of evil spirits, that he would not accept of his company; *Whitby's Annotations.*

ⁱ Mark v. 19.

† Some learned men are of opinion, that this ruler of the synagogue was the president of the consistory of the twenty-three judges, who were appointed in every city to punish such offences as were not capital; but it is more generally thought, that he was not a civil magistrate, but a leading man in the synagogue of Capernaum, who had, in a great measure, under his direction such things as related to the service of God. We are to observe, however, that the word ἀρχισυνάγωγος is sometimes take in a strict sense, for the person who was the president,

certain woman *, who had been diseased with an unnatural flux of blood for twelve years, and (in hopes of a cure) had in vain spent all her estate upon physicians, being now confident, that if she could but come to touch the hem of his garment, she should be healed, pressed forward; and having got a touch of it privately, (as she thought,) found herself perfectly sound. But she was not unknown to Jesus; and, therefore, when he, perceiving that † virtue was gone out of him, turned about in the throng, and de-

A M.
4035, &c.
Ann Dom
31. &c.
from Matt.
xii i. Mark
ii 23. Luke
vi. i. John
v 1. to
Mar. xvii.
14. Mark
ix 14.
Luke ix.
37. John
vii. 1.

manded the head and master of the synagogue who (according to this acceptation) was but one; and, at other times, in a larger sense, so as to comprehend the presbyters and elders likewise, in which sense, the rulers of the synagogue were more than one. How many they were, is no where defined, because that depended upon the largeness of the city, and the number of those who frequented the place of divine worship; only we may observe, that Jarius was not the chief president, because he is called *one of the rulers of the synagogue*, Mark v 22; *Vertinga De regim. synag. lib. 2. c. 11.*; *Calmet's Commentary*, and *Hammond's* and *Whitby's Annotations*

* Eusebius tells us for a certainty, that this woman was a Gentile, living in Paneas, or Cæsarea Philippi, a town situate near the head of the river Jordan. Hist. eccl. lib. 7. c. 18.; and upon the report of others, relates this story—That, by the gate of this woman's house, was erected a brass statue, bearing the effigies of a woman upon her knees in the posture of a suppliant; that, opposite to her there stood the effigies of a man in brass, resembling our Saviour, stretching out his hand to the woman; that, at the feet of this statue, an unknown plant sprung up which, reaching to the border of his garment, became a present remedy against all manner of diseases; and that these statues were standing even unto the time of the emperor Maximianus. who took them away from this city. But (not insisting upon the many exceptions that might be made to this story, which favours much of the superstition of later times) how a woman, who, as all the evangelists inform us, had spent all that she had, should be able to erect two such costly statues, or how the Jews, in all their wars, or the Gentiles, who were both bitter enemies to Christianity, should suffer such a confirmation of it to remain so long, we can by no means imagine; *Calmet's Commentary*, and *Whitby's Annotations*

† Hence it is evident, that the virtue, whereby our Saviour did these miraculous cures, was not communicated to him, but resided in him, and consequently proves that he was God. For the virtue whereby the prophets and apostles did their cures is

A. M. 4035, &c. Ann. Dom. 31, &c. from Matt. xii. 1. Mark ii. 23. Luke vi. 1. John v. 1. to Matt. i. xvii. 14. Mark ix. 14. Luke ix. 37. John vii. 1.

manded who it was that * had touched him? The poor woman came trembling, and, falling down at his feet, declared to all the company, both the cause, and miraculous effects of her touching him, which he was so far from blaming, that he commended her faith, and imputed her cure to the wonderful strength of it.

During this transaction, the delay proved fatal (as one might imagine) to Jarius; for a message was brought him, that his daughter was actually dead, and therefore there was no occasion to give Jesus any farther trouble; but our Saviour, who overheard what the messenger said, bid the father not fear, but only believe, and then he should find the blessed effects of his faith in the recovery of his daughter: But he had scarce spoke these words, when approaching the house, he found the musicians †, and mourners already

Matth. ix. 23. Mark v. 35. and restores Jarius's daughter to life again.

ascribed to God: as when it is said, that *God did special miracles by the hand of Paul*, Acts xix. 11.; but the miracles done by Christ are imputed to *the virtue which went out of him, and healed all that sought to touch him* Luke vi. 19. *The virtue's going out of him*, however, is a popular expression, which must not be taken in its literal sense, as if it were a quality distinct from the person of Christ, and what might pass from him to another; because the divine power residing in him was incapable of any alienation or diminution, be the cures he performed never so many, never so miraculous; and therefore the only meaning of the expression must be, that it went out, with regard to us, or according to our conceptions and apprehensions of things, when it discovered and manifested itself in the cure of some disease, or any other outward effects; *Whitby's Annotations*, and *Calmet's Commentary*.

* Our Saviour's disciples, we find, admired at his asking this question, Mark v. 31. but the reason for his doing so, we may suppose, was to discover to the people the greatness of the miracle, which without this examination, might have gone off without being known; to shew them the strength and virtue of the woman's faith and confidence in his power; and thence to convince Jarius, who began a little to stagger in his faith, that he was able to revive his daughter, even though she was dead, if he did but believe; *Calmet's Commentary*, and *Beaufobre's Annotations*.

† In all the books of the Old Testament, there is not the least hint given us of any musical instruments employed in funerals. We read indeed of a good deal of mourning for the dead, of mourners hired on purpose, and of the dismal ditties which these people sung, to excite sorrow in others: But the use of music was reckoned an incongruous thing, and no wise comporting

already come, who were deploring her death with melancholy tones and loud lamentations, according to the custom of those times. He desired them however, as he went in, to cease their funeral ceremonies, because at that time there was no occasion for them; and so, with the young woman's parents, and, Peter, and James, and John, going into the chamber, he approached the bed where she lay, and taking her by the hand, commanded her to arise; at which powerful word she immediately revived, and walked round the room, to the no small amazement of her parents. At his departure, he ordered them to give her something to eat, and left a strict charge with them that they should make the miracle a secret; but their joy was too great to conceal, what, in gratitude for so great a mercy, they thought they were obliged to divulge.

3 H 2

In

comporting with the solemnity of this sad season. Among Heathen authors there is frequent mention made of it, as a thing long in use both with the Greeks and Romans; and therefore we may presume, that from these nations it was that the Jews borrowed, and adopted it into their funeral ceremonies. That among them it was in use in our Saviour's time, at least among persons of the better rank, is plain from the passage now before us: that it was an established custom in the time of Josephus, is evident from his own testimony; and that it grew into a kind of superstitious use, in the times following, is evident from what the Rabbins enjoin, *viz* that none, even of the meaner sort, should, at the funeral of a wife, have fewer than two flutes, besides the voices of old women, who, by their sad modulation, were to extort lamentation from others; *Selden's Uxor. Hebr. lib. 3 c. 8.*; *Hammond's Annotations*, and *Calmet's Commentary*.

* The reason which our Saviour gives for this, is,—That *the maid was not dead, but asleep*, Matth. ix. 24. Now, in several places of the New Testament especially, death is called a *sleep*. John xi. 11. Acts vii. 60. 1 Cor. xv. 6. &c. and therefore our Saviour only makes use of this word of a softer signification, not so much with a design to impose upon those to whom he directed his speech, as to testify his humility, and great modesty, in his desire to conceal his divine power. The persons he spoke to were certainly those who were preparing for her interment, and performing the funeral rites belonging to it; and therefore he only imitates, that she was not so dead as they accounted her, *i. e.* not to come to life again before the resurrection; but that her death was no more than what he could remove with the same facility as another might be awakened out of sleep; *Whitby's and Pool's Annotations*.

A. M.
4035, &c.
Ann Dom
3. &c
from Mat.
xii 1. Mark
ii. 23. Luke
vi. 1. John
v. 1. 10
Matt. xvii
14. Mark
ix 4.
Luke ix.
37. John
vii. 1.

Mat. ix. 27.
He cures
two blind
men, and
one dumb
demoniac
at Caper-
naum. but
is badly re-
ceived at
Nazareth.

Matt. xiii
54 Mark
vi. 1.

In his return from Jarius, our Lord was followed in the streets by two blind men, imploring his aid, who, as soon as he had entered the house, came after him, and, when he had cured them, were dismissed with a strict charge to conceal the miracle, which, out of the abundance of their joy, they could not do. And, no sooner were the blind men gone, but the people brought to him a dumb man possessed with a devil, which when he had cast out, the person immediately recovered his speech, to the great astonishment of the multitude, who unanimously acknowledged that the like had never been seen in Israel; only the Pharisees persisted in their old malice, and insinuated to the people, as formerly, that he ejected devils by the help of some supreme devil, who had the rest under his controul, and with whom he was confederate.

After a short stay at Capernaum, our Lord departed, with his disciples, into some other parts of Galilee. About a year before, he had been barbarously treated by the inhabitants of Nazareth, the place of his education; and yet, notwithstanding this, he was resolved once more to make them a fresh tender of mercy. To this purpose he went into their synagogue on the Sabbath-day, and taught the people; but (instead of being converted to the faith) though they were astonished at his abilities, they were scandalizing his person, and began to upbraid him with the meanness † of his parentage and employment, as they had done before; insomuch, that being sensible that ‡ a prophet never wanted honour but in his own country, he did

† The word τέκτων is of general signification, and denotes any worker, either in wood, metal, or stone; but the tradition of the church has all along been, that our Blessed Saviour was, what our translation has specified, a carpenter; and Justin Martyr assures us, that he made ploughs and yokes, which at that time were the carpenter's business. However this be, it is certain, that by the Jewish canons, all parents were bound to teach their children some trade; that their most celebrated rabbins thought it a great reproach not to be of some profession; and that there was a peculiar reason, why our Saviour should be of one, and that no very liberal one neither, even to take off all suspicion of his being bred up in curious arts, which his enemies, at all times, were forward enough to say, notwithstanding the disadvantages of his education; *Beausobre's* and *Whitby's Annotations*.

‡ This was a common proverb among other nations, as well as the Jews; and therefore Aristides was wont to say, That a philosopher

did not abide with them long : nor did he work any mi-
 racles there (except the cure of a few sick persons) by rea-
 son of their infidelity.

Upon his departure from Nazareth, he visited most of
 the cities and villages of Galilee, teaching in the syna-
 gogues, preaching the gospel, and curing all kinds of di-
 seases among the people ; and, as he observed, one day the
 numerous throngs and multitudes that resorted to him, he
 looked upon them with an eye of pity and compassion, as
 so many sheep dispersed and destitute of shepherds ; and
 from thence formed a resolution to send out his twelve a-
 postles (by two and two together) into the more distant
 parts of Judea, whilst himself continued preaching in Ga-
 lilee, and the places adjacent.

To this purpose * he invested them with a full power to
 cure all diseases, eject devils, and even raise the dead. He
 gave them instructions in what manner they were to behave
 in the places whither they went ; but forbade them, at the
 same time, to address themselves to any of the Gentiles, or
 Samaritans, but only to the lost † sheep of the house of
 Israel.

philosopher was never worse than at home ; *Grotius on Matth.*
 xiii. 57.

* Among all the accounts which the Heathens have given
 us of their famous magicians, and workers of wonders, there
 are none to be found who ever pretended to a power to dele-
 gate their virtue to others, or to impart their power to them,
 upon the invocation of their names, or belief of their doctrine.
 Hence Arnobius (advers. Gentes, lib. 1.) having summed up
 the miracles which our Saviour did, adds, That he not only
 did them by his power, but permitted many others to do them
 by invocation of his name, nor did he any peculiar and asto-
 nishing miracles himself, that he did not enable his little ones
 and even rustics to perform. Whereupon he asks those he writes
 to. Did ever that Jupiter whom the Romans worship in their
 capitol give the like power to any mortal ? And then concludes
 this to be a demonstration of a truly divine power : for, to trans-
 fer your miraculous power to a man, and to give authority and
 strength to a creature to do that which you alone can do is
 an infallible evidence of one who hath power over all, and the
 causes of all things at his beck ; *Whitby's Annotations.*

† He calls all Israel *sheep*, though they were not obedient
 to the voice of the shepherds, as being all chosen people. He
 calls them *lost sheep*, because they were in great danger of be-
 ing lost and ruined, by the ignorance and wickedness of their
 guides ; and to them the apostles were sent, because they were
 the children of the kingdom, *Matt. viii. 12.* to whom the pro-
 mise

A. M.
 4035. &c.
 Ann Dom
 31. &c.
 from Mat.
 xlii 1.
 Mark ii. 23.
 Luke vi. 1.
 John v. 1.
 to Matt.
 xvii 14.
 Ma kix 14.
 Luke ix 37.
 John vii. 1.
 Mat ix 35.
 Mark vi. 6.
 Sends out
 his apostles
 and gives
 them their
 commis-
 sion.
 Matt. x 1.
 Mark vi. 7.
 Luke ix. 1.

Mat. x. 16
Mat. xi. 1.
Mark vi. 12
- Luke ix. 6

The murder of John the Baptist and its occasion.

March xiv.
6. Mark
vi. 21.

† Both the city and fort that were called by this name, were situated beyond Jordan, about two leagues from that river, on the north east side of the Lake Asphaltites, or Dead-sea, and not far distant from the place where the river discharges itself into

day *, having made a splendid entertainment for the Lords and chief officers of his dominions, he was infinitely pleased with the dancing of a young lady, daughter to his unlawful wife Herodias †, inſomuch that in the height of his mirth and jollity, he promiſed (with the addition of an oath) to grant her whatever ſhe demanded ‡, though it amounted to half of his dominions. Unwilling to loſe ſo fair an opportunity, ſhe immediately conſulted with her mother what favour to aſk, who, being prompted by the height of her malice and revenge, named the head of John the Baptiſt § to be given her; which the daughter accordingly demanded of the king, in the preſence of the whole aſſembly.

A. M.
4035. &c.
Ann. Dom.
31, &c.
from Matt.
xvi. 1.
Mark ii. 23.
Luke vi. 1.
John v. 1.
to Matth.
xvii. 14.
Mark ix.
14. Luke
ix. 37.
John vii. 1.

This

into it. It was in the hands of Aretas King of Arabia when he married his daughter to Herod Antipas; but how it afterwards came into Herod's poſſeſſion (as it certainly was when he beheaded John the Baptiſt) we have no account from hiſtory: *Calmet's Commentary.*

* That it was an uſual cuſtom with kings to celebrate the day of their birth, and that of their acceſſion to the throne, (for the word may be applied to either,) with great ſolemnity, we have an example as old as Pharaoh, Gen. xl. 20.; nor need we doubt but that, on ſuch joyful occaſions, there were muſic and dancing, and all manner of diverſions to entertain the company: But that perſons of the firſt rank and diſtinction ſhould aſt any part in theſe diverſions, was a rare unwonted thing; and therefore St Chryſoſtom, in Matth. hom. xlix. is of opinion, that Herodias, foreſeeing what would happen, forced this young lady upon a thing which would better become an actress upon the ſtage; *Calmet's Commentary.*

† This Herodias, (as Joſephus relates the matter,) in contempt of the laws of her country, was married again to Herod, the natural brother of her huſband, ſeparating herſelf from him whiſt living, although he had a child by her; ſo that being guilty both of inceſt and adultery, ſhe might well be called his unlawful wife; *Antiq. lib. 18. c. 17.*

‡ An offer like this we find Ahaſuerus (a great Aſſyrian monarch) making Queen Eſther, chap. v. 3.

§ It may not be improper here to take notice of the remarkable providence of God, in avenging the death of this righteous man upon Herod, Herodias, and her daughter. 1ſt, As the war between Herod and Aretas King of Arabia was occaſioned by Herod's wicked contract with Herodias to eject his daughter, who was his lawful wife, and to marry her who was his brother Philip's; ſo Joſephus declares, that the Jews looked upon his putting John to death as the cauſe of the miſcarriage of his army, God being angry with him for the death of John the Baptiſt.

A. M. 4035, &c. Ann Dom 31, &c. from Matt xii 1. Mark i. 23 Luke vi. 1. John v. 1. to Matt. xvii. 14. Mark ix. 37. John vii. 1.

This strange request at first caused an exceeding damp † upon the king's spirits; but having recovered himself, (out Baptift. 2dly. Envyng the glory of her brother Agrippa, upon whom Caligula had conferred the title of a king, Herodias prevailed with her husband to repair to Rome, in order to request the like favour upon the Emperor; but the Emperor having received a bad impressiion against him, instead of granting what he desired, deprived him of his government, and banished both her and him to Lyons in France, where they lived ingloriously, and died miserably; and this, according to Josephus, (Antiq. lib. 18. c. 9.), was done in punishment of her envy, and of his readiness to hearken to her solicitations. And, 3dly. Of her daughter it is related, that as she was going over the ice in winter, the ice brake, and let her in up to the head, which, upon the meeting of the ice again, was severed from her body. And this story, if it be true, (as it is confidently told us by Nicephorus, Hist. eccl. lib. 1. c. 20.), is a wonderful instance of God's avenging providence; *Whitby's Annotations.*

† Herod was no more than a tetrach, or one of those four among whom his father's kingdom was divided; but St Mark, chap. vi. 14. gives him the title of a king, as himself no doubt was fond enough of it, and perhaps, in the provinces under his dominions, was generally called by it. Why he came to be concerned at the young lady's desiring so strange a boon as that of the Baptists head, is no wonder. The very mention of such a thing from such a person, and in such an assembly, was enough to shock any man of less than uncommon barbarity; but then the evangelists inform us, that Herod had conceived a good opinion of the Baptift, as a just and holy man, and when he heard him, (as he did it very gladly,) in many things he followed his advice, Mark vi. 20.; and not only so, but feared the resentment of the people likewise, (with whom he was in high esteem,) when they should come to be informed of the cause and circumstances of his death, Matt. xiv. 5. There might, however, be another reason, less observed, for Herod's concern upon this occasion. It was now his birth-day; and it was usual, even among Heathen princes, at such a time to be gay and merry, to think of no ill omens, to surcease all contentions, and not so much as to deprive of life even condemned criminals, on that day when the sovereign of the country received his, lest they should offend or sadden the genius that presided over their nativity: And therefore it is more than probable, that Herod, who was more than half a Pagan, might have the same notion of the thing. But if he had not, it can hardly be thought but that such an execution would damp the joy of the meeting, and procure him more enemies among the thinking part of the company, than the non-performance of a wicked and illegal oath could have done; *Hammond's Annot. and Cal. Com.*

(out of a pretended reverence to his oath, and respect to his nobility then present,) he sent an executioner *, who beheaded † John, and brought his head in a charge r to the young lady, which she presented to her mother ; but, as for his body, his disciples, when they came to hear of his death, took care ‡ to bury it, and to bring Jesus the news of the tragical fate that had befallen their Master.

About the same time that Jesus was informed of John's death by his disciples, his own apostles returned from their several journies, and gave him an account of all their transactions. The fame of the miracles which our Saviour, both by himself and his apostles, had wrought, gave Herod some umbrage to think, that the person who did them was John, whom he had unjustly murdered, and who

* The word *στυχολάτωρ*, which we render *executioner*, in the history of the Roman emperors, signifies a *soldier of the guard*; and among the Jews, Romans, Chaldeans, and Egyptians it was customary for one of the king's guard to be the executioner of those whom he had condemned to death; *Hammond's Anno*

† Thus died the great fore runner of our Blessed Saviour, about two years and three months after his entrance upon his public ministry, in the thirty fifth year of his age, and was the first who suffered upon the account of the gospel, though seldom called the first martyr. ' He was indeed a man (according to the character which Josephus gives of him) endued with all virtue, who exhorted the Jews to the practice of justice towards men, and piety towards God, and also to baptism, which would become acceptable to God, if they renounced their sins, and to the cleanness of their bodies, added the purity of their souls; ' *Antiq. lib. 18. c. 7.*

‡ When Herodias had got the Baptist's head in her possession. it is said, that she thrust his tongue through with her bodkin, and for fear that the head, if buried with the body, should be reunited, and, rise again to disturb her unlawful lust and disquiet Herod's conscience, she buried it in her own palace; but where his disciples buried his body, the evangelists have not informed us; only we are so told, that, in the time of Julian the apostate, his tomb was shewn at Samaria, where the inhabitants of the country opened it, and burnt part of his bones; but the rest were saved by some Christians, that carried them to one Philip, an abbot at Jerusalem, who presented them to St Athanasius: but some time after, when Theodosius built a church in honour of the Baptist, in the place where the temple of Serapis stood. Ann. Dom. 396. these holy reliques were reposit in it: Though what became of his head

A. M.
4035, &c
Ann Dom
31, &c
from Matt
xi. 1.
Mark ii. 13
Luke vi. 1.
John v. 1.
to Matth
xvii. 14.
Mark ix.
14. Luke
ix. 87.
John vii. 1.



Matt. xiv.
15
Mark vi.
38.
Luke ix.
82.

now very probably * was risen from the dead to revenge his blood upon him; and therefore, knowing the subtilty and cruelty of that prince, our Saviour ordered his apostles to prepare a vessel, wherein he, and they only, might cross the sea of Galilee, and retire for a little while from the multitude to a desert near Bethsaida. But in vain was it for him to think of concealing himself: The people, seeing where he took shipping, ran after him on foot by the lake side, and, though they had a great circuit of land to take, were got into the desert almost as soon as he; which singular instance of their zeal so affected his compassion, that though he came to that place for the sake of retirement, he could no longer withhold his presence from them; but, ascending a mountain, and taking his disciples with him, he there first instructed them in several things concerning the kingdom of God, and having afterwards cured their sick and diseased, he, at last, fed them all, to the number of five thousand men, besides women and children, with five barley-loaves, and two small fishes, (having at first invoked a blessing

we no where read; only the Abbot Villeloin tells us in his memoirs, that he saw one at Amiens, but that this was the fifth, or sixth head of the Baptist, that, in the course of his travels, he had the honour to kiss; *Theodore. Hist. eccl. lib. 3. c. 3. Ruffin. Hist. c. 27* and *Calmet's Dictionary*, under the word.

* Several of the ancient Jewish writers, as well as some modern Rabbins, are of opinion, that the souls of men and women, when they died, went into other bodies, insomuch that they imagine, that the soul of Moses was the same with that of Abel; and that of the Egyptian whom Moses slew, the same with that of Cain: But whether the Jews had this notion of the transmigration of souls, (as Josephus, *De bell. Jud. lib. 7. cap. 25.* and Philo, *De somniis*, seem to tell us,) it can hardly be thought, that what Herod here says, in regard to our Saviour, was spoken in allusion to it, because it is not conceivable how the soul of John, lately dead, could enter into the body of Christ, which for thirty years and upwards, had been informed by another soul. And therefore his words must be understood, not of the transition of the Baptist's soul, but of his reviviscence, or returning to life again. For, as it was an opinion among the Jews, that, at the coming of the Messiah, some of their prophets would rise from the dead, Herod had some reason to suppose, that John, whom all the Jews held to be a prophet, might be permitted to return into the world, and perhaps to avenge his death upon the tyrant; *Calmet's Commentary*; and *Whitby's Annotations*.

sing * upon them,) and that with a plenty so exuberant, that the very fragments † which remained filled twelve baskets.

This miraculous multiplication made such an impression upon the multitude, that they no longer doubted of his being the Messiah, and were therefore resolved to set him up for their king by main force; but he, knowing the mischief of such a design, constrained his disciples (who were forward enough perhaps to join in the thing) immediately to take shipping, and to pass by Bethsaida ‡ to Capernaum,

A. M.
4035. &c.
Ann Dom.
31, &c.
from Matt.
xiii 1.
Mark ii 23.
Luke vi. 1.
John v. 1.
to Matt.
xvii 14.
Mark ix 14.
Luke x 17.
John vii. 1.

* The evangelists make use of two words upon this occasion; *blessing and giving thanks* ; and by the former of these, some interpreters understand the multiplying virtue which he then commanded down upon the sustenance that he was going to give to the people, and its marvellous increase in the hands of the distributors, whereby it became a repast sufficient for so large a multitude : Though others think, that he did no more than what we call *saying grace*, i. e. thanked God for his bountiful provision of all things, and begged his blessing upon what he was going to dispense among the people, that it might tend to the wholesome nourishment of their bodies. However this be, it is enough to warrant the indifferent use of these two words that the forms of address to Almighty God, upon the use of his gifts for our refreshment, have usually been of a mixed nature, as consisting partly of praises, and partly of petitions ; because the end of such devotions is manifestly twofold, viz. to render our acknowledgements to God for his liberality, and then to beg of him, that the good creatures which he hath given us may be sanctified to our use ; *Stanhope on the epistles and gospels, vol 2.*

Avoids being made king, and walks upon the surface of the sea.

† It was a sufficient reason for our Saviour's ordering the fragments to be gathered up, and put in baskets, that, from them might appear both the reality of the miracle, and the exceeding greatness of the increase ; but because our Lord assigns another, by saying, *Gather up the fragments, that nothing may be lost*, he hath herein shewed us, that all reserving for the future is not unlawful ; that charity is very consistent with frugality ; indeed not only that they may, but that they should, go together : for God will be sure to make a mighty difference between the virtue and the specious extreme beyond it ; between the liberal and the lavish man ; *Stanhope on the epistles and gospels vol 2.*

‡ St Mark tells us, that our Saviour ordered his apostles to cross the sea, and wait for him on the other side, at Bethsaida, chap. vi. 45. St John writes, that accordingly they entered into the ship, but instead of going where they were directed,

A. M. pernaum, whilst himself dismissed the multitude; and
 4035, &c. (when he had so done) continued, till after midnight, in
 Ann Dom meditation and prayer.

31, &c. In the mean time, the ship where the apostles were on
 from Matt board, was tossed with a great storm in the middle of the
 xii. 1. Mark lake. The waves ran so high, and the wind was so con-
 ii. 23. Luke trary, that, as soon as morning appeared, they had not
 vi. 1. John got much above a league on their voyage, when our Savi-
 v. 1. to our came walking * upon the surface of the sea, and drev
 Matt. xvii near towards the ship. This strange appearance † (which
 14. Mark they took for a spirit) increased their fear not a little.
 ix. 14. Our Lord indeed, to dispel it, told them who he was;
 Luke ix. but Peter, still doubtful, wanted a demonstration, which
 37. John when he permitted him to try, and the apostle, upon
 vii. 1. the experiment, was ready to sink, graciously reached out
 Matt xiv his hand, and, with a gentle rebuke for the weakness
 24 Mark of his faith, setting him again upon the top of the waves,
 vi 47 walked along with him to the vessel; which they
 John vi. 17. had

they steered their course towards Capernaum, chap. vi. 17. and yet after all, if we will believe St Matthew, they landed at last, neither at Bethsaida, nor Capernaum, but in the country of Gennesareth, chap. xiv. 34. Now, to reconcile this, we need only remember what all the evangelists tell us, viz that while the apostles were on board, there arose a strong gale of wind, which, blowing from the north, proved, in a manner, quite contrary to them, so that, instead of making the port of Bethsaida which is on the north coast of the sea of Galilee, the next morning they found themselves on the opposite side, not far from Tiberias, and to the south of Capernaum. Though therefore our Saviour ordered them to go to Bethsaida, yet they could not do it, because the wind was against them. Their next attempt therefore was to get to Capernaum; but even that they could not do; but being forced to yield to the storm, were carried a good way below to the south of it, from which they just touched at Nazareth, and thence proceeded to Capernaum; *Calmet's Commentary.*

* Among several other instances of God's omnipotence, Job mentions this as one, that *he treadeth upon the waves of the sea*, Job ix. 8

† It was a common opinion among the Jews, that spirits did sometimes appear, clothed in an human form; but what put the apostles at this time in the greater fright, was their imagining, that those who appeared at night, were usually evil spirits, and that this, which they now saw, might possibly be the demon who had raised the storm; *Beausobre's Annotations.*

had no sooner entered, but the winds, knowing their duty to their sovereign, ceased. This the rest of the disciples observing, came and adored Jesus, acknowledging his omnipotence, and admiring the divinity of his power and person; and as it was not long before the ship gained the port, great numbers out of the country, as soon as they understood that he was arrived, brought their sick and diseased on beds, and laid them before him in the streets, beseeching him to permit them only to touch the border of his garment, and as many as touched him were made whole.

The multitudes whom our Lord had miraculously fed in the desert near Bethsaida, were in expectation of finding him next morning on the mountain; for they had seen the disciples take shipping without their master, and no other vessel left for him: But perceiving that he was gone, as well as his disciples, and having an opportunity of other vessels from Tiberias, they passed over with all expedition to Capernaum, where they found him teaching in the synagogues; and being in no small surprise, desired to know of him how he got thither? But instead of gratifying their curiosity * with a direct answer, he, who knew their corrupt expectations, and that they came after him, not so much for his miraculous gifts as the gratification of their own appetites, took occasion from thence to discourse to them of a certain food, different from what he had given them

* We may observe from several parts of the gospel, particularly from Luke xiii. 23. 24. John xii. 34. 35. that it was usual with our Blessed Saviour to answer nothing to such curious questions as had no tendency to edification, but to divert the people from them, by proposing some more profitable subject; *Whitby's Annotations.*

† Our Blessed Saviour, through the greatest part of the sixth chapter of St John's gospel, takes an occasion, from the multitude's coming after him out of a greedy desire to be fed, to discourse to them of spiritual blessings, under the metaphors of meat and drink; and for his apology in so doing, we may observe, that among the Oriental and Jewish writers, no metaphor was more common than this; that to this purpose Solomon, in his book of Proverbs, introduces Wisdom crying in the streets, *Come, eat of my bread, and drink of my wine, which I have mingled,* Prov. ix. 5. *For they that eat me shall yet be hungry, and they that drink me shall yet be thirsty,* says the wise son of Sirach; 'for the soul (as Plato expresses it) is nourished by receiving and practising good things; and wisdom, temperance, and piety, are the food of a soul that can suck them in:'

That

A. M. them in the desert of Bethsaida, infinitely more deserving
 4035, &c. of their inquisition, and whereof the manna in the wilder-
 Ann Dom nefs was no more than a figure, or a type. What this food
 31, &c. was, he signified to them, viz. The merits of his future
 from Matt. death and passion, which alone could be available for the
 xii. 1 Mark obtaining of eternal life to such as believed in his divine
 i. 23 Luke mission, and descent from heaven.
 vi. 1. John

v. 1. to But these sublime truths, which for the present he
 Matt. xvii. thought proper to couch in terms obscure and figurative
 14. Mark. enough, so gravelled the intellects of his auditory, that
 ix 14. Luke even his disciples began to murmur, and many of his fol-
 ix 37. John lowers, mistaking the words in a literal, which he intend-
 vii. 1. ed in a spiritual, sense, and thence inferring that he was
 John vi. 60. not such a Messiah as they imagined, wholly deserted him,
 infomuch that he began to suspect the fidelity of his very
 apostles, until Peter (in behalf of all the rest) declared their
 fixed purpose of adhering to him, upon full conviction
 that he was the Messiah, the Son of the living God. But
 notwithstanding this liberal and frank confession, our Lord
 gave them to understand, that they were not equally sound;
 for among the twelve whom he had selected, one of them
 was to prove a traitor, meaning this of Judas Iscariot, who
 justly deserved that name, because he afterwards betrayed
 him.

Whether our Blessed Saviour was at Jerusalem on the
 third passover after his baptism, the evangelists have not
 informed us; but it is very probable, that he who came to
 fulfil all righteousness would not neglect so great an ordi-
 nance. Upon this presumption, it is most generally be-
 lieved that he was there, though very likely he might not
 stay long, but as soon as the festival was over, return into
 Galilee, ^k because the rulers, at Jerusalem, lay in wait for
 an opportunity to put him to death.

Upon

That as our Saviour calls himself the bread which came down
 from heaven, Philo upon the words of Moses descants, ' what
 ' food can God rain down from heaven, but that heavenly
 ' wisdom which he sends down upon the soul that desires it ?'
 That as he exhorts the people to labour for the meat that pe-
 rishes not, Philo declares, that the wisdom of God is the ' nurse
 ' and nourisher of those that desire incorruptible diet ;' *L. De eo
 quod deterius*, p. 137. And from thence we may perceive why
 our Saviour insists so much upon this metaphor, even because
 it was familiar to the Jews, and used by their most celebrated
 writers ; *Whitby's Annotations*.

^k John vii. 1.

Upon his return into Galilee, a certain number of scribes and Pharisees * were sent from Jerusalem to be spies upon his actions, and to criticise upon his doctrine. These men observing, that, when he and his disciples were to eat, they frequently sat down without washing their hands, contrary to the common custom of the Jews, which (as they pretended) was founded upon a tradition †, expostulated with him the reason for so doing :

But A. M. 4035, &c. Ann Dom 31. &c. from Matt. xii 1. Mark ii. 23. Luke vi. 1. John v. 1. 10. Matt. xvii. 14. Mark ix. 14. Luke ix. 37. John viii. 1.

* The Sanhedrim, which sat at Jerusalem, and was the supreme court in all religious affairs, sent messengers to John the Baptist, when he began his preaching, enquiring who he was, and by what authority he baptized, John i. 19. And as the Pharisees had charged our Saviour's disciples with a violation of the Sabbath, in plucking and rubbing the ears of the corn, and himself with the same crime, in curing the sick on the Sabbath day, it is not improbable that these accusations had reached Jerusalem, and that the scribes and Pharisees, here mentioned, were emissaries sent from the Sanhedrim to watch and observe our Saviour. And this seems the rather to be so, because they were so very ready (when they could find him guilty of no violation of the laws of God) to pick a quarrel with him about some rites and ceremonies of the church, which he and his disciples thought not so very necessary to be observed; *Pool's Annotations.*

† The traditions, in the Jewish church, came to gain credit, upon this presumption, that Moses, when he received the law from God on mount Sinai, which he recorded in his five books, was instructed at the same time in several things, which God enjoined him not to commit to writing, for fear that the Heathens should transcribe them: That, in these things, Moses instructed his successor Joshua, and, from Joshua, they were transmitted, through the elders of the people, by oral conveyance only, until Ezra, after the return from the Babylonish captivity, collected them all together, and made the Cabbala, in seventy-two books, which was kept by Gamaliel, and others that succeeded, as heads of the Sanhedrim, until the destruction of Jerusalem: That, about an hundred and twenty years after this, R. Judas, the son of Simon, composed a book of them, called *the Mishna*, i. e. *the second law*, which is indeed the most ancient collection of traditions that the Jews have: That, three hundred years after this, R. Jonathan, meeting with more, compiled them into a larger volume: and an hundred years after this, another Rabbi made a collection of such as were found among the Jews who remained in Babylon: That these two (which are a kind of supplement and explanation

A. M. But (instead of answering them directly) he put another
 4035. &c. question to them, by way of recrimination, viz. Why
 Ann Dom they, by their pretended traditions *, vacated the laws
 31. &c. of God, particularly, that so solemn one of honouring
 from Matt. their
 xii. i. Mark
 ii. 23. Luke
 vi. i. John
 v. 1. to
 Matt. xvii.
 14. Mark
 ix. 14.
 Luke ix.
 37. John
 vii. 1.

tion of the Mishna) are called, the one the Talmud of Jerusalem, and the other, of Babylon; and that by these, the Jews, at this day, are governed in matters ecclesiastical, all the world over. In relation to the particular custom of washing before meat, their canon is, that 'Whosoever despiseth the washing of hands, is worthy to be excommunicated: he comes to poverty, and will be extirpated out of the world:'. For (according to the sense of one of their doctors, viz. R. Aquiba) 'he that takes meat with unwashed hands is worthy of death; and therefore when the same doctor was in prison, and had not water enough both to drink and wash his hands, he chose to do the latter; because 'it is better (says he) to die with thirst, than to transgress the tradition of the elders.' It is no wonder then that persons inured to those notions, should so readily take exception at our Saviour's omitting what were indeed (though they thought not so) matters of an indifferent nature; *P's, W's, H's, and B's. Anno. and Lightfoot on Matth xv. 2.*

* The way whereby the Jews made the law of honouring and subsisting their father and mother of no effect, was, by pretending that whatever their parents requested of them, was a *Corban*, i. e. that they had devoted it as a gift or offering to God, or to his temple; and whatever was thus devoted, was not to be touched by the necessity ever so urgent. For their canon about vows was.—'That they reach even to things commanded, and take place as well in things required by the law, as things indifferent; that a man may be so bound by them, that he cannot without great sin, do what God had commanded to be done; and that, in this case, if he makes a vow, which cannot be performed without breaking a commandment, his vow must be ratified, and the commandment violated'. This was a superstition which the Pharisees, and other doctors of the law, who had a property in the gifts and oblations that were made to the temple, thought themselves concerned to indulge; and therefore, when any pretended that their parents stood in need of their help, they told them, that if they did but acquaint them that it was a gift, or that they had vowed such a portion of their estate to sacred uses, that would, before God, excuse them from relieving them: Nay, they affirm farther, that if a man but did in a passion say, that the thing which another asked of him was a *Corban*, though it were not actually consecrated to religious uses, this was vow enough to prevent his relieving that other person, even, putting the case, that it were his own father; unless

their parents, and relieving them in their wants? And thereupon looking upon them as so many hypocrites *, with whom he disdained to hold any farther converse, he turned to the multitude, and informed them, ' that true piety did not consist in outward ceremonies, but in a sincere observance of the laws of God; that no pollution could be in what entered into a man's mouth, but only in what proceeded from it; for (as he afterwards explains the thing to his disciples) whatever we eat does not affect the mind, the only seat of defilements; for it passes into the stomach, and is soon thrown out of the body, so that, be it never so gross or unclean, it cannot pollute the eater: But all pollution is from within, from the corruption of the heart, such as impure thoughts, unchaste desires, unholy purposes, immodest and indecent speeches, &c. These are the things that leave a lasting stain upon the soul, which a thing so merely external, as omitting to wash before meat, cannot do.'

This was a doctrine not well pleasing to the Pharisees, as his disciples told him; but they were a set of people whose censure he justly despised, *blind leaders of the blind*, (as he properly enough calls them), whose vain traditions, unless they should absolve him from it, which they would undertake to do for so many shekels of silver, Levit xxvii. Such abundant reason had our Blessed Saviour to charge the Jewish doctors with making one of the greatest commands in the second table of the law void by their traditions concerning vows; *Pool's* and *Whitby's Annotations*, and *Pocock's Miscel.* p. 415.

* In several places of the gospel, our Lord calls the Pharisees hypocrites, not only because they placed the worship of God, and a great deal of sanctity and religion; in ceremonies of human institution, and though they pretended to extraordinary purity, did all their good works to be seen of men, Matt. xxiii. 5. but more especially in this place, because, being superstitiously careful to avoid the outward pollution of the body, by abstaining from the touch of any thing which they reputed unclean, and washing their hands whenever they thought they had done so; they left that which was within, viz. their hearts and affections, full of iniquity, uncleanness, extortion, and excess, Matt. xxiii. 25. and Luke xi. 39. But from Christ's example in this particular we must not be forward to pronounce men hypocrites, because we have neither that authority, nor that knowledge of their hearts, which he had; *Whitby's Annotations*.

A. M. as having nothing of divine institution in them, his purpose was to abolish. And from thence, in departing to the coasts of Tyre * and Sidon, he entered into an house, with a design to conceal himself; but a certain Syro-phœnician woman, having got intelligence where he was, came, and earnestly requested of him to cure her daughter, who was sadly tormented with a devil. Our Lord (for the trial of her faith) seemed at first to take no notice of her, until his disciples (to get rid of her importunity) desired him to grant her request, and dismiss her. His ministry, he told them, was confined to Judea, nor was he properly sent to any, but the lost sheep of the house of Israel. All this the poor woman heard, but so far was she from being discouraged by such coldness, that, advancing nearer, she threw herself prostrate at his feet, imploring

* Both the ancient and present condition of Tyre we have had occasion to take notice of before, p. 10, in the notes: And now to do the like to Sidon: It is generally supposed to have taken its name from Sidon, a son of Canaan, Gen. x. 15. and upon that account to be one of the most ancient cities in the universe. It was formerly very strong both by art and nature, having on the north side a fort, or citadel, built on an inaccessible rock, and invironed on all sides by the sea. The commodiousness of its situation made it a great place of trade, which brought in vast riches, and made the inhabitants not a little luxurious, insomuch that to live *after the manner of the Sidonians*, is the Scripture phrase, Judges xviii. 7 for to live voluptuously. At present it is strangely altered from what it was; for though it is well enough stocked with inhabitants, yet it is very much shrunk from its ancient extent, and much more from its splendor, as appears from the great many beautiful pillars which lie scattered up and down in the gardens without the present walls. Tyre and Sidon were situated both on the Mediterranean sea, about twenty miles distant from each other, and the country adjoining to them, which lay to the west and north of Galilee, was called the coasts or territories of Tyre and Sidon. The old inhabitants of this tract were descendents of Canaan, (for Sidon was his eldest son,) and continued in possession of it much longer than they did of any other part of the country. The Greeks call it *Phœnicia* and when, by right of conquest, it became a province of Syria, it took the name of *Syro-phœnicia*; and from hence the woman, whom St Matthew calls a *Canaanite*, is by St Mark styled a *Syro-phœnician*, as being, both by religion and language, a Greek; *Well's Geography of the New Testament*, c. 7. and *Maundrell's Journey from Aleppo to Jerusalem*.

ploring his help for her child; and when (in an harsh metaphor) he told her, that *it was not proper to work those miracles for an Heathen, which were originally designed for God's people, the Jews*; the afflicted mother owned indeed the truth of what he had alledged, but then (continuing the same figure) she humbly hoped, *that a poor distressed Heathen might, in some small measure, partake of the mercies which were more peculiarly promised to the Jews*. Which answer was so highly expressive of the woman's humility, faith, and reliance, that he granted her petition; so that, when she returned home, she found her daughter laid upon the bed, and perfectly well.

From the coasts of Sidon, our Lord passed eastward to Decapolis *, and from thence, towards the sea of Galilee, where, in his way, he cured a deaf and dumb man, by putting his fingers † in his ears, and some of his spittle upon his tongue; and thence repairing to a mountain, he not only cured every person that was brought unto him, whatever his malady or distemper was, but, in the conclusion, fed all the multitude, which amounted to four thousand men, besides women and children, (and who, for three days successively had been attending him,) with seven loaves, and a few small fishes.

3 K 2

Having

* It is a country in Palestine, which was so called, because it contained ten cities, some situated on the east, and others on west side of the river Jordan; the first and principal city is Scythopolis; and the rest (according to Pliny) are, 2d. Philadelpia; 3d. Raphanæ; 4th, Gadara; 5th, Hipos; 6th, Dion; 7th, Pella; 8th, Garasa; 9th, Canatha; and 10th, Damascus; though others reckon them after another manner, as Pliny himself observes, lib 5. c. 18.; *Calmet's Dictionary*, under the word.

† Christ often made use of visible signs to represent that divine invisible virtue which was inherent in him, and which, upon that occasion, he intended to exert; and therefore, because deaf persons seem to have their ears closed, he put his fingers into the man's ears, to intimate, that, by his power, he would open them; and, because the tongue of the dumb man seems to be tied, or to cleave to the palate, therefore he moistened it with spittle, to signify that he would loose and give free motion to it. These, it is true, were not capable to effect the cure, but they had this use in them, that they excited the observation and attention of the people before whom these cures were wrought; *Whitby's and Beaufobre's Annotations*.

A. M.
4035. &c.
Ann Dom
31, &c.
from Matt.
xii 1. Mark
ii. 23. Luke
vi. 1. John
v. 1. 10
Matt xvii.
x4. Mark
ix 14. Luke
ix. 37. John
vii 1.

Having thus dismissed the company, he embarked with his disciples for the coast of Dalmanutha * ; but no sooner was he arrived there than the Pharisees, joining with their enemies the Sadduces, came, and demanded of him a sign from heaven, in order to convince them that he was the true Messiah : But having first upbraided them with their acuteness in discerning the face of the sky, and from thence the prognostics of fair or foul weather, and their blindness in not perceiving the manifest signs of the Messiah's coming, he remitted them (as he had done before) to the miracle of his own resurrection, and sailed back with his disciples.

Matth. xv.
29. Mark
viii, 10.
His reason-
ing with
the Phari-
sees and
Sadduces,
and with
his own dis-
ciples.
Matth. xvi.
5. Mark
viii. 14.

His disciples, in the hurry of their departure, had forgot to take bread with them ; and therefore, when our Saviour, in their passage, gave them caution to take care of the leaven † of the Pharisees and Sadduces, and they were ignorant enough to take his words in a literal sense, he first gently reprov'd the blindness of their understandings, and the shortness of their memories, who had so soon forgotten his miraculous multiplication of the loaves and fishes, at two different times, and then gave them to understand, that his words did not concern the leaven of bread, but the corrupt doctrines of the Pharisees and Sadduces.

Mark viii.
31.
His curing
a blind
man at
Bethsaida,
and mak-
ing trial of
his apostles
faith.

With this discourse they landed at Bethsaida, which (though the birth-place of several of his apostles) had by the perverseness and infidelity of its inhabitants so offended him, that, when a blind man was presented to him for cure,

* What St Matthew calls *Magdala*, St Mark names *Dalmanutha*, and the reason hereof is, because these two places lay very near together, and Dalmanutha very probably within the precincts of Magdala ; *Wells's Geography of the New Testament*, and *Beaufobre's Annotations*.

† The leaven of the Pharisees was their hypocrisy, and too scrupulous observance of the traditions of their elders ; and that of the Sadduces was their denial of the existence of angels and devils, the resurrection of the body, and the immortality of the soul ; so that the meaning of our Saviour's caution to his apostles is :—To avoid the principles of those, who place the sum of their religion in outward performances, which avail nothing to the sanctification of the soul ; and to reject all such doctrines as tended to subvert religion, by cutting off all hopes of happiness in a future state ; *Calmet's Commentary*, and *Whitby's Annotations*.

cure, he would not do it in the city in the sight of the inhabitants; but taking him out of the gate, he anointed his eyes with his spittle, and laid his hands on them. The man at first saw objects indistinctly, men like trees walking; but when our Lord had laid his hands upon him the second time, he restored him to his perfect sight; and so sent him home, with a charge * not to return into the city, nor to discover the thing to any person belonging to that place.

From that place he departed into the coasts of Cæsarea Philippi †, where, being minded to make some trial of his apostle's faith and proficiency, he demanded of them what opinion mankind had of him, and whom they took him to be? Some (say they) take you to be John the Baptist ‡ risen from the dead; some Elias sent down from heaven; and others Jeremias, or some other of the ancient prophets, restored

A. M.
4935, &c.
Ann Dom
37, &c.
from Matt.
xii. 1.
Mark ii. 23.
Luke vi. 1.
John v. 1.
10 Matt.
xvii. 14.
Mark ix. 14.
Luke ix.
37 John
vii. 1
Math. xvi.
3 Mark
viii. 37.
Luke ix. 18.

* The reason of our Saviour's giving the man this charge is founded upon the infidelity of the people of Bethsaida, where-with he upbraids them, Matth. xi. 21.

† This city is situated near the head of the Jordan, and was by the Canaanites called *Laisb* or *Lechem*, Judg. x. iii. 7 but being taken by some of the Danites, it was by them called *Dan*, and it is generally reputed the utmost border northward of the land of Israel. It was usually called by Heathen writers *Panear*, from the adjoining spring *Panem*, or *Panion*, which is commonly taken for the fountain-head of Jordan. Augustus Cæsar gave it, and all the territories belonging to it, to Herod the Great. He having rebuilt the place gave it and the tetrarchy of Iturea and Trachonitis, to which it adjoined, to his youngest son Philip who, when he had enlarged and beautified it, so as to make it the capital of his dominions, and chief place of his residence, gave it the name of *Cæsarea Philippi*; partly to compliment Tiberius Cæsar, who was then Emperor; partly to preserve the memory of his own name; and partly to distinguish it from another Cæsarea, mentioned in Acts x. 1. situate on the Mediterranean, and built by his father in honour of his great benefactor Augustus Cæsar; *Wells's Geography of the New Testament*.

‡ Those who held that Jesus was John the Baptist risen from the dead, were of the same opinion with Herod the tetrarch, Matt. xiv. 2. and seem to have imbibed the notion of the Pharisæes, who (according to Josephus) used to say, that a good man might easily return to life again. Those who took him for Elias, ran into the general opinion of the nation, that Elias was to come before the Messiah, and anoint him when he came; and therefore, notwithstanding his doctrine and miracles, they could

A. M. restored to life again : But when he continued asking what
 4035. &c. their notion of him was, and Simon * (in the name of the
 Ann Dom rest) had made an open confession that he was Christ, the
 31, &c. Son of the living God, he not only allowed that confession
 from Matt. xii. 1. to be true, and what was confirmed by the attestation † of
 Mark ii. 23. God himself, but, in allusion to the name he had given
 Luke vi. 1. him,
 John v. 1. to Matt.

xvii. 14. could not conceive him to be the Messiah, so long as his mean
 Mark ix. 14. appearance was contrary to their expectations : And those who
 Luke ix. 37. thought him to be Jeremias, seem to have espoused the senti-
 John vii 1. ment of some of their doctors, who looked upon that prophet
 as the head of the whole order, not improbably upon the cha-
 racter which God gives him, *Before I formed thee in the belly I
 knew thee, and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified
 thee, and I ordained thee a prophet to the nations,* Jer. i. 5. *Whit-
 by's and Beaufobre's Annotations.*

* That the rest of the apostles knew and believed the great
 truth which St Peter here declares, no one can doubt who calls
 to mind the attestation made of it before by John the Baptist,
 John i. 34. the frequent confessions of it by evil spirits dispos-
 sessed before their eyes, Mark iii. 15. and that full declaration
 of it in the name of the whole fraternity, *We believe, and are
 sure, that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God,* John vi.
 69. For which reason we find the fathers, upon this occasion,
 speaking of St Peter as the mouth, the tongue, the voice of
 the church, and a kind of foreman to the rest of the apostles ;
 for this they might think a matter of decency and good man-
 ners, a means to prevent confusion and disorder, and a token
 of that union and harmony which was among them that one
 man should speak for all the rest. And why that one man
 should be St Peter, rather than any of the rest, may very rea-
 sonably be imputed to the seniority of his age, the natural fer-
 vour of his temper, and his longer attendance upon our Blessed
 Saviour than several of the rest had been employed in. These
 are sufficient reasons for his delivering the judgment of the
 company, and for our accounting his confession the common
 voice of all, to a question which had evidently been propound-
 ed to them all ; *Stanhope on the epistles and gospels, vol. 4.*

† The words in the text are. *Flesh and blood hath not revealed
 this to thee, but my Father which is in heaven,* Matth. xvi. 17.
 But how did God reveal this to Peter? Those who pretend
 that he had a particular revelation, not vouchsafed to any o-
 thers, without which he could not have owned Christ to have
 been the Son of God, must not only allow the like revelation
 to Nathanael, John i. 49. to the centurion who was present at
 our

him, which signifies a *rock* * or *stone*, he told Simon; A. M. 4035, &c. Ann Dom 31, &c.
 ' That he would make him a foundation stone, or a prime
 ' minister † in building his church, which should be so
 ' firmly from Matth. xii 1.

our Lord's crucifixion, Matth. xxvii. 54. and to all others who Mark ii. 23. Luke vi. 1. John v. 1. to Matth. xviii. 14. Mark ix. 14. Luke ix. 37. John vii. 1.
 made declaration of the same faith; but must likewise excuse
 all those Jews who did not believe in Christ, because it was not
 in their power so to do without this peculiar revelation. With-
 out running ourselves into these premunires therefore, we may
 reasonably conclude that the sense of our Saviour's words is
 this,—' What others say of me, *viz.* that I am John, Elias,
 ' Jeremias, or the like, this thou hast learnt from men; but
 ' the faith which thou hast now confessed concerning me,
 ' though it required of thee a due attention to the proofs given
 ' of it; yet since those proofs are the doctrine which I teach
 ' from God, and the miracles done in confirmation of it, are
 ' apparently the finger of God, thy faith must be acknowledg-
 ' ed to be the result, not of human wisdom, but of divine re-
 ' velation. God has given thee a teachable and intelligent
 ' mind, to perceive, by my doctrine and miracles, that I am the
 ' true Messiah, notwithstanding the obscurity of my appear-
 ' ance, and therefore thou mayest be truly said to be taught of
 ' God, because my doctrine is the word, and my miracles are
 ' the power, of God;' *Whitby's Annotations; and Calmet's Com-
 mentary.*

* Peter was so called, either because his being the apostle of
 the Jews, to whom the gospel was first tendered, might make
 him, in some sense, one of the first foundations of the Christian
 church, Eph. ii. 20. or because the firmness and resolution
 wherewith he supported the Christian cause, even to the day
 of his martyrdom, was very eminent and remarkable; *Beau-
 sibre's Annotations.*

† It is very evident, that, whereas the word *church* is capa-
 ble of two senses, and taken, in common speech, sometimes for
 a society of persons worshipping God, and sometimes for a
 place set a part for the public performance of such worship,
 our Saviour intends it here in the former of these senses; and
 that the building of this church (which is a metaphor of fre-
 quent use in the New Testament) signifies the doing all those
 things, either in private Christians or public communities of
 them, which may contribute to their growth in grace and
 goodness, their mutual strength and support, their perfection
 and continuance; and accordingly, Christians, thus united to-
 gether, are called a *spiritual house*, 1 Pet. ii. 5. *an heavenly
 building, fitly framed together, and an habitation of God through the
 Spirit*, Eph. ii. 21, 22. *Stanhope on the epistles and gospels, vol. 4.*

A. M. 4035. &c. Ann Dom 37, &c. from
 Matth. xii. 1. Mark ii. 23. Luke vi. 1. John v. 1. to Matth. xvii. 14. 14. Mark ix. 14. Luke ix. 37. John vii. 1.

‘firmly established, that all the power * and policy of its enemies should not be able, at any time, to destroy it; and that, for the more orderly government of it, he would give him the keys of the kingdom of heaven; so that his sentence, whenever it should regularly exclude or admit any person into the bosom of the church upon earth, should in like manner, be ratified and confirmed in heaven.’ But then to prevent the ill use that might be made of this discovery, he strictly charged his apostles † not to declare to any man, that he was the Messiah.

Per-

* The words in the text are,—*The gates of hell shall not prevail against it*, Matt. xvi. 18. Some interpreters mean by the word *hades*, which we translate *hell*, the state or place of the dead; and by the *gates of hades*, the power of death; and so the words, applied to the members of Christ’s mystical body, or to particular Christians, will mean, ‘That though, at present, death has the dominion over them, yet shall not his conquest of those that die in the Lord, be absolute and final. They shall not continue dead to all eternity; but shall revive, a second time, to a better life, and triumph over this last great enemy of mankind.’ Others by *hell* understand the place of infernal torments; and so, by an easy figure, apply it to the devil and his angels, inhabiting those regions of darkness; but then, because the gates of cities are not only, in all countries, places of strength, but, among the Jews more especially, were places of judicature, and where magistrates met to consult for the security of the public, it hence comes to pass, that by *the gates of hell*, they mean the strength and policy of the wicked, and so make the sense of our Saviour’s promise to be this, —‘That, notwithstanding all the wicked contrivances of Satan and his instruments, to destroy the profession of Christianity in the world, yet all their power and policy should not be able to effect it. Christ’s holy religion should stand and flourish, in despite of their wicked contrivances; and, however a defection might happen in some particular places, to the end of the world, he should never want a society of men, confessing, with St Peter, that *Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God*,’ Matth. xvi. 16. *Whitby’s* and *Hammond’s Annotations*; and *Stanhope on the epistles and gospels*, vol. 4.

† In several parts of the gospel we find our Saviour enjoining the people whom he had cured, not to make any publication of his miracles, Matth. viii. 4. and ix. 30.; but it is an injunction of a particular nature, not to discover that he was the Christ, though this was an article necessary for every man to know and believe in order to his salvation. Now, though this was a point necessary for all to know, yet the apostles were not the

Perceiving, by this discourse with Peter, that his disciples had got a right notion of his office and divinity, he began thence forward to prepare their minds for his sufferings, and to talk more openly of his death and resurrection. One day, therefore, as he was insisting on the sufferings which he was to undergo at Jerusalem*, and Peter, unable to endure a thought so disagreeable to the dignity of his Master, desired him to desist †, he gave him a very

A. M.
4035. &c.
Ann Dom
31, &c.
Matt.
xi i.
Mark ii. 23
Luke vi. 1.
John v. 1.
Matt.
xvi 14.

sharp

Mark ix 14.
Luke x. 37.
John vii 1.

the proper persons at this time to declare it, because it might look like a kind of confederacy between them if they should prove too lavish in the commendations of their master. It would much better become his infinite wisdom therefore, to find out himself a proper opportunity for the discovery of this great truth, without drawing the envy of the Pharisees upon him, and obstructing the progress of the gospel, which could hardly be believed, considering the low circumstances wherein he appeared; and which had it been believed, might have encouraged the attempt of the Jews to come, and make him a king, John vi. 15. What therefore our Saviour says to his three apostles, in relation to his transfiguration, that they should *tell no man of it, until he was risen from the dead*, Matth. xvii. 9. is applicable to this passage likewise. For, after his resurrection, they were by office to be his witnesses, and to declare to others that he was the Christ, because they could then do it, not only without suspicion of confederacy, but with great advantages and success, after that Christ had taken possession of his kingdom, and had testified this, by sitting down at the right-hand of power, and, by sending down upon them the Holy Ghost, to enable them to confirm their testimony; *Pool's, Beaufobre's, and*

Mat. h. xvi.
21. Mark
vii 31.
Luke ix. 22.
Letting
them into
the know-
ledge of his
future suf-
ferings;

* Jerusalem was the place where this tragedy was to be acted. because, as our Lord observes, a prophet could not suffer out of that city, Luke xiii. 33 for there sat the Sanhedrim that was to try him; and there lived the Roman governor who had the power of life and death, and was to condemn him; *Whitby's Annotations.*

† Peter's words in the Greek are *Μὴ σὺ, Κύριε*, Matt. xvi. 22. which we may render *propitius esto tibi, Domine favour thyself, or be kind to thyself*. 'Since the rulers at Jerusalem have such malevolent designs against thee, why shouldst thou think of going any more among them? If they intend to evil treat thee, and take away thy life, be thou kind and favourable to thyself; avoid the danger by keeping at a distance from it, and consult thine own preservation by continuing here.' This seems to be the proper sense of St Peter's words, and they were doubtless spoken with a good intention, and singular affection for his Master; but still they argued great weakness in him,

A. M.
4035. &c.
Ann Dom
31, &c.
from
Matth xii.
1. Mark ii.
23. Luke
vi. 1.
John v. 1.
to Matth.
xvii. 14.
14. Mark
ix. 14.
Luke ix.
37. John
viii. 1.

sharp rebuke *, as a person whose advice crossed his gracious purposes of man's redemption, and favoured of nothing but worldly grandeur; and therefore, to extinguish in them all notions of a temporal kingdom, he called his disciples, and told them, that 'Whoever pretended to profess his religion, should take up his cross †, or patiently submit ' to

in pretending to contradict one whom he had just before acknowledged to be *the Christ, the Son of God*, and denote him ignorant of the redemption of mankind by that death which God in his wise counsel had determined; *Pool's Annotations; and Young's Sermons, vol. 2.*

* The words of our Saviour upon this occasion are,—*Get thee behind me, Satan; thou art an offence to me*, Matth. xvi. 23. Not that we are to think, that our Saviour ever imagined that St Peter, in this advice, had any pernicious designs against him, as the great enemy of mankind has, when he tempts and deludes them into sin; but his only meaning is, that his interposition in this affair was very unreasonable, and highly repugnant to his design of coming into the world, which was to save it. 'Thou thinkest perhaps, says he, Peter, that, in this thy advice, thou shewest thy kindness to me, as a friend that respects my welfare, and art tender of my preservation; but, instead of that, thou art an adversary to me, (for so the word *Satan* signifies, Numb. xii. 32 2 Sam. xix. 23. 1 Kings v. 4. &c.), in thy endeavouring to draw me aside from doing what is my Father's will and command, John x. 18. I told thee that I must suffer; that such is the determinate counsel of God, and such my fixed purpose and resolution; and therefore all advice to the contrary is so far from pleasing, that it is an offence to me; I cannot away with it; and therefore *get thee behind me, Satan*: For, though there is no malice in thy intention, yet imprudently hast thou run upon the same advice, that Satan uses the most successfully of all others to undo men by, and that is, the advice of self-indulgence. For favour thyself is the most artificial of all the suggestions of the devil; because that being made specious with the pretences of reason and justice, and sweetened by its agreeableness to that of self-love, with which all men do naturally abound, it seldom fails of being swallowed, though poison and death lurk under it: *Pool's and Whitby's Annotations; Calnet's Commentary. and Young's Sermons, vol. 2.*

† Among several notions, it was a custom for the criminal to bear the cross whereon he was to suffer, to the place of execution; Lipsius De cruce, lib. 2. c. 65. And, in allusion to this, our Saviour makes use of the phrase, to denote our chearfully bearing those trials and persecutions which the divine providence

‘ to all manner of persecutions, in sure and certain hope
 ‘ of an happy immortality, which he would procure for
 ‘ his followers, when he was in his kingdom, in which
 ‘ some, that were then present among them, ere it was
 ‘ long, (but certainly before the day of their death,) *
 ‘ should see him happily instated.’

A. M.
 4035, &c.
 Ann Dom
 31, &c.
 from Matt.
 xii. 1.
 Mark ii. 23.
 Luke vi. 1.
 John v. 1.

About
 10 Matt.

dence brings upon us in the execution of our duty, and our adherence to his most holy religion; *Pool's* and *Beaufobre's* *Annot.*

xvii. 14.
 Mark ix. 14.
 Luke ix.
 37 John
 vii 1.

* Our Saviour's words are these:—*Verily I say unto you, there are some of them, who are standing here, who shall not taste of death, until they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom,* Matt. xvi. 28. Some interpreters, both ancient and modern, understand this passage of our Lord's transfiguration on the mount, in which there was some glimpse of the glory of his Father, and the attendance of angels; but, besides that this happened too soon (no more than six days) after these words were spoken, to need the expression of *some of them not seeing death* until it came to pass, which must at least denote some distance of time; it is very plain, that, at this wonderful sight, none of the three apostles could behold Christ coming in his kingdom, because his kingdom did not commence till after his resurrection when *all power both in heaven and earth was given him,* Matt. xxviii. 18. Others imagine, that the passage relates to the great day of judgment, because it is said, that Christ will *reward every man according to his work,* chap. xvi. 27. But then, on the other hand, it may be alledged, that there was none in the company then standing there, who was not to die, or to taste of death (which is the Jewish phrase) long before the coming of that great and terrible day of the Lord: And therefore, others have concluded, that this coming of Christ in his kingdom relates to another event, *viz.* the destruction of the Jewish church and nation, wherein our Lord may properly enough be said to *come in the glory of his Father, and with his angels,* and to reward the Jews in destroying them, and Christians in preserving them, according to their works. This happened above forty years after our Saviour's death, when some of the company (as particularly John the evangelist was) might be then alive, and witnesses of the accomplishment of our Lord's menaces against that devoted city and nation. This is the popular interpretation at present; but I cannot see, why the other parts of our Saviour's exaltation may not be taken into the account; for, as he began to enter upon his kingdom by his resurrection, and ascension into heaven, so his sending the Holy Ghost upon the apostles, as well as the terrible judgment which he brought upon the Jewish nation, may all be looked upon as the effects and consequences of

A. M.
4035, &c.
Ann Dom
31. &c.
from Matt
xii 1.
Mark ii. 23
Luke v. 1
John v. 1.
to Matth.
xviii. 14.
Mark ix.
14. Luke
ix 37.
John vii 1.

† About eight days after this, our Lord, to revive the hearts of his disciples, as well as to instruct them more fully in the nature of his kingdom, thought it not improper to give some of them at least a specimen of his future glory; and accordingly, taking with him his three most intimate apostles, Peter, James, and John, he ascended an high mountain †, and there, (while he was employed in prayer) he was suddenly transformed into another kind of appearance; for a bright lustre darted from his face, more glorious than the sun, and a dazzling splendour

his glorious reign;
Mat. xvii 1
Mark ix 1
Luke ix 28
and then
his transfiguration on
the mount.

his glorious reign; *Whitby's* and *Beausobre's Annotations*; and *Calmet's Commentary*.

† What St Luke calls (ὡσεὶ ἡμέραι ὀκτώ) about eight days, chap. ix. 28. St Matthew and St Mark make after six days: But the reason of this seeming disagreement is, that the two last evangelists compute only the entire days between our Saviour's discourse and his going up into the mount, and therefore style them six: whereas St Luke, including both the days of his discourse, and his ascent, calls them eight days. And this is evident from the word ὡσεὶ which, when any sum is mentioned, is always added to signify, that it is not exact, but wants something to make it complete, as may be seen in Matth. xiv. 21. Luke i 56 —iii 23.—xxiii. 44. John iv. 6 —xix. 14. Acts ii. 41. &c. *Whitby's Annotations*.

† That this was mount Tabor, (which stood in the midst of the Lower Galilee, at an equal distance between the Mediterranean and the sea of Tiberias,) is a matter confirmed by the voice of all antiquity. But some modern writers are of a different opinion, because Tabor (say they) does not stand in the way between Cæsarea Philippi and Capernaum, and that our Saviour travelled from Cæsarea to this mount, (which is almost through the whole length of Galilee,) is a little too much to suppose; *Lightfoot* in Mark ix. But this he had space enough to do in the six intervening days between his discourse and his transfiguration; and that he really did so, is made very probable, both from St Matthew and St Mark, who seem to intimate, that after he had finished his discourse with his disciples, he entered immediately upon his journey; and, accordingly, we hear nothing more of him, until the expiration of six whole days, Matt. xvii. 1. Luke ix. 28. As to the description of the mount itself, see vol. 3 p. 171. in the notes, only we may add here from Mr Maundrell, that on the top of it are three grottos, made to represent the three tabernacles, which St Peter proposed to erect, in the astonishment that possessed him, at the glory of the transfiguration; *Journey from Aleppo to Jerusalem*, p. 112. 113.

his glorious reign; *Whitby's* and *Beausobre's Annotations*; and *Calmet's Commentary*.

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dor, piercing from his body through his garment, made them appear whiter than snow, and more radiant than the light. During this heavenly scene there appeared Moses and Elias, clothed with all the brightness and majesty of a glorified state, familiarly conversing with him, and discoursing of his death and sufferings.

While the intercourse continued between these three, Peter, and his two fellow apostles, were fallen asleep; but waking just before their departure, they were exceedingly surprised and terrified at the sight of so much glory and majesty. Peter indeed begged of his Master, that they might continue in that happy place, and erect three tents, one for him, and the other two for Moses and Elias: But while he was thus talking, scarce knowing what he said in his fright and transport, a bright and shining cloud suddenly came over them, and a voice from thence proclaimed, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.* Upon which the apostles were seized with a greater consternation than ever, and fell prostrate upon the ground; but upon our Lord's touching and encouraging them, they looked up, and saw none but him; for the other two were vanished.

As they descended the mount, he strictly commanded them not to tell any man what strange things they had seen until he was risen from the dead. They were ready to obey his commands, but did not rightly understand his last words *; and therefore they had some altercations among themselves concerning the meaning of his rising from the dead: And another difficulty they had to solve; for having seen Elias with our Saviour upon the mount, they could not forbear asking him, What reason the scribes and Pharisees had for asserting that that prophet was to come upon the earth before the Messiah? To which our Saviour replied, That these Jewish doctors were not mistaken in their notion, because Elias was in effect come already, and had received the same bad treatment from his countrymen that himself in a short time was to expect; from whence they perceived, that by the Elias he spoke of, he plainly intended John the Baptist.

The

* The doctrine of the general resurrection they could not but understand; for that the Pharisees believed, Acts xxiv. 15. and of that Martha makes acknowledgement, John xi. 24.: nor could they be ignorant of the meaning of any particular man's

A. M.
4035. &c.
Ann Dom
31, &c.
from Matt.
xii. 1. Mark
ii. 23. Luke
vi. 1. John
v. 1. to
Matt. xvii.
14. Mark
ix. 14. Luke
ix. 37. John
vii. 1.

THE OBJECTION.

THE pool of Bethesda (if what St John ^a relates of it be true) was certainly one of the most remarkable places in all Jerusalem. Its cures were so wonderful, and so highly conducive to the honour of the Jewish nation, that for what reason the other evangelists should say nothing of them, we can hardly imagine; but why Josephus ^b, who professedly wrote the history of the Jews, and is always forward enough to boast in their praise, should give us no manner of account of this peculiar manifestation of God's distinguishing providence over that people, is a thing utterly unaccountable. Since the evangelist therefore stands alone in this story, it would have been some satisfaction to his readers, had he a little more minutely recounted when this pool first acquired its miraculous quality, and how long it retained it; upon what particular occasions, and how oft, the angel descended to trouble its waters; and by what means its waters, when troubled, became both impregnated with a sanative virtue, and yet so limited in their operation, as to cure but one diseased person at once.

^c The raising of the widow's son to life again might possibly be a true miracle, ^d though instances there have been of the mistaken death of persons, who, from a state of lethargy, have revived; as might be ^e the case of the

man's rising from the dead; for of that they had instances in the Old Testament, and had lately seen an example of it in the gates of Naim, Luke vii. 15. But being taught out of the law, that Christ was to abide for ever, John xii. 34. and that of his kingdom there should be no end, Luke i. 33. they could not tell how to reconcile his death (which was to be previous to his resurrection to the predictions of the prophets, and their own conceptions of his temporal kingdom; and therefore we may observe, that when Christ was dead, their hopes died with him: *We trusted that it had been he who should have redeemed Israel*, Luke xxiv. 21.; but that at his resurrection they revived again, which made them ask, *Wilt thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?* Acts i. 6.; *Whitby's Annotations.*

^a Chap. v. 2.—8.

^c Luke vii. 11.—16.

^e Luke viii. 41. &c.

^b Woolston on the miracles.

^d Woolston on the miracles.

‘ the ruler’s daughter likewise, ^f because we find our Sa- A. M.
 ‘ viour so strictly enjoining her parents to conceal the mi- 4035, &c.
 ‘ racle. But whatever may be said in behalf of these, it Ann. Dom.
 ‘ is highly improbable that what ^g happened to the demo- 31, &c.
 ‘ niacs, in the country of the Gadarens, should be true, from
 ‘ not only because the Jews, who dwelt in these parts, h Mat. xii. 1.
 ‘ were prohibited to eat swine’s flesh, and, ⁱ under the Mark ii. 13.
 ‘ pain of an anathema, forbidden to keep any in their coun- Luke vi. 1.
 ‘ try; but even upon the supposition that the swine be- John v. 1.
 ‘ longed to the neighbouring Gentiles, it will be no easy to Matth.
 ‘ matter to vindicate the goodness and justice of Christ, in xvii. 14.
 ‘ permitting so large an herd thus to be destroyed, and Mark ix.
 ‘ their owners injured in so egregious a manner. 14. Luke
ix. 37.
John vii. 14

‘ ^k Our Lord’s transfiguration on the mount was, doubt-
 ‘ less, a glorious sight; but still we are at a loss for the
 ‘ reason of his appearing in such an extraordinary manner
 ‘ at this time rather than another; ^l for his making a
 ‘ mountain rather than a valley the scene; and his apo-
 ‘ stles (who were of his party) rather than the multitude
 ‘ (who wanted conviction) the witnesses of this his maje-
 ‘ sty: nor can we conceive why the true Moses and Elias
 ‘ (not any spectres or apparitions in their likeness) should
 ‘ be present with Jesus on the mount, and the apostles o-
 ‘ ver-hear them discourse together, and yet not leave us
 ‘ one word of what was the subject of their conversation.

‘ We cannot but admire likewise, why John the Baptist,
 ‘ who was sent into the world for this very purpose, that
 ‘ he might ^m bear witness of Christ, (as if he had now for-
 ‘ got himself, or was grown diffident of what he had so
 ‘ often testified to others,) ⁿ should send his disciples to
 ‘ enquire of him, whether he was the true Messiah or no.
 ‘ Why our Blessed Saviour, who, as a teacher sent from
 ‘ heaven, was to instruct the people in the most plain
 ‘ truths, made use of the parabolical method, (wherein
 ‘ there is a manifest obscurity,) especially since the declared
 ‘ end of his doing so is said to be, ^o *that seeing they might*
 ‘ *not see, and hearing they might not understand*: Why he
 ‘ did not ^p vouchsafe the Pharisees a sign from heaven,
‘ to

^f Woolston, Ibid.

^g Matth. viii. 28.

^h Wool-

ston, ibid.

ⁱ Spencer, de Leg. Heb. p. 117,

^k Matth.

xvii. 1. &c.

^l Woolston, ibid.

^m John i. 6. 7.

ⁿ Matth.

xi. 2. &c.

^o Luke viii. 10.

^p Matth. xvi. 1. 3.

A. M. 4035. &c. Ann Dom 31, &c. from Mat. xii. 1. M rk ii. 23. Luke vi. 1. John v. 1. to Matt xvii. 14. Mark ix. 14. Luke ix. 37. John vii. 1.

‘ to approve himself the prophet foretold by Moses, especially since the design of the prophet Jonas (which was only typical of his future resurrection) was incompetent for a present sign, and incapable of giving them any satisfaction: Or, lastly, why he made such mean instruments, as obscure illiterate fishermen, to be the first preachers of the gospel, when, in all subsequent ordinations, a tolerable stock of knowledge and learning, as well as some influence and authority among the people, is thought no bad qualification for that office.

‘ Whether the evangelists have given us a right representation of our Saviour’s behaviour, we shall not pretend to determine, but a person of a philosophical soul, much more of a divine original, should be seated above all passionate resentments, one would think, and look upon his enemies (if he had any) with pity and contempt, rather than with ^a anger an indignation: And so calm and composed should his whole deportment be, as to give no umbrage to any, much less to his nearest relations, (who may be presumed to know him best,) to call in question the soundness of his intellectuals, or to come to apprehend him at any time, under pretence that ^r he was beside himself.

‘ Whatever some Protestants may imagine, we cannot but think, that our Blessed Lord invested St Peter with a certain pre-eminence above the rest of his apostles, when upon him he promises ^s to build his church, and to give him the keys of the kingdom of heaven: But what the ^t unpardonable sin against the Holy Ghost does properly import, and in what sense we are said ^u to eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and to drink his blood, both Protestants and Papists have been at a long puzzle to find out: And therefore no wonder that some of our Lord’s first disciples, upon hearing of these ^x hard sayings, which are not yet discovered, and perhaps never will, ^y went back and walked no more with him.’

St John, according to the general sense of antiquity, having perused the other evangelists, and observed in what particulars they were defective, at the persuasion of the other

Answered by shewing that St John’s gospel was to supply the defects of the other evangelists.

^a Mark iii. 5.
^t Ibid. xii. 31.
^y Ibid. ver. 66.

^r Mark iii. 21.
^u John vi. 53.

^s Matth. xvii. 18. 19.
^x Ibid. ver. 60.

ther bishops of Asia, was prevailed upon to write his gospel as a supplement to their omissions. Whoever will give himself the trouble to compare his history with that of the other evangelists, will find this notion in a great measure verified. For (not to mention other particulars) our Saviour's miracles, antecedent to his resurrection, as they are recorded by St John, are no more than eight. 1st, His turning water into wine at the marriage of Cana in Galilee. 2^d, His telling the Samaritan woman the secrets of her life. 3^d, His healing the nobelman's son at Capernaum. 4th, His curing the lame man at the pool of Bethesda. 5th, His feeding five thousand men with five barley loaves and two fishes. 6th, His walking upon the surface of the water, and calming the storm at sea. 7th, His giving sight to a blind man by anointing his eyes with clay. And 8th, His raising Lazarus from the dead. Now, all these are omitted by the former evangelists, except the 5th and 6th, which St John seems to have recorded chiefly to introduce a moral discourse which our Saviour took occasion to make to the people, and which the other sacred penmen had omitted; which is a plain argument that the intent of St John's gospel was to supply the defects of the other three; and that therefore their silence is no manner of argument against St John's account of the pool of Bethesda.

It may seem a little strange indeed, that Josephus should give us no account of it, especially when the sanative virtue of its waters, occasioned by so extraordinary a means, could not but redound to the honour of his country. But when it is considered that the like omissions have been frequently made by other historians, who in their writings have neglected to insert several considerable matters of antiquity, merely because they were so familiar and well known to them: ^a When it is considered that Josephus, in particular, wrote his history for the information of the Greeks and learned Romans, who were Heathens, and for fear of shocking their belief, is very tender of dwelling too much upon miracles: When it is considered, that he is entirely silent in several other instances that bear some relation to our Saviour Christ; that he does not so much as intimate the slaughter of the infants at Bethlehem, mentioned by St Matthew ^b, nor give any clear account of the Roman cen-

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^a Bishop Smallbrook's Vindication, p. 498. ^b Dr Pearce's Vindication, part 4. p. 19.

^c Chap. ii. 16.

A. M.
4035, &c.
Ann Dom
31, &c.
from Matt.
xii. 1.
Mark ii. 23.
Luke vi. 1.
John v. 1.
10 Matt.
xvii. 14.
Mark ix. 14.
Luke ix.
37 John
vii. 1

A. M.
4035, &c.
A. M. Dom
31, &c.
from
Matth. xii.
1. Mark ii.
23. Luke
vi. 1.
John v. 1.
to Matth.
xvii. 14.
14. Mark
ix. 14.
Luke ix.
37. John
vii. 1.

pus or taxation, which occasioned our Lord to be born at Bethlehem, as it is recorded by St Luke ^c: When it is considered, that the miraculous cure of the impotent man by Jesus had so visible a connection, that he could not, in decency, give an account of the one without making some mention of the other; and therefore chose rather to decline the history of both: And, lastly, When it is considered, that this pool (according to ^d Tertullian) ‘ceased to be ‘beneficial to the Jews, upon their final perseverance in ‘blasphemy and infidelity against Christ;’ there is no wonder at all that Josephus, who was very defective in other matters, and no great lover of miracles, should omit giving us an account of a pool, whose virtue was extinct and gone when first he wrote his antiquities, and which he could not well make mention of, without giving an implicit honour to Christ.

When it
first had
and lost its
sanative
quality.

That, upon the death of our Blessed Saviour, this pool might lose its sanative quality, is no improbable conjecture, because the Jews no longer deserved such a peculiar blessing; but when at first it came to be impregnated with it, is not a matter of so easy solution. The words in the text are, that *an ^e angel went down* (*κατά καίρον*) *at a certain season*, which ^f a learned author chuses rather to render *at the season*, (i. e. of the passover,) *and troubled the water*; from whence he infers, that the first time of this supernatural moving of the water, and consequently of the pool’s receiving a miraculous healing quality, was at this passover; which was the second after the commencement of our Saviour’s public ministry: and the reason he assigns for its being this rather than any other passover, is, -- ‘That our ‘Saviour, having gone through all the cities of Galilee, ‘and most of the other parts of the country of Judea, ‘preaching and healing diseases, came up to Jerusalem at ‘the passover, with an intent to fix his abode there; that, ‘to prepare his way before him, God might give this pool ‘an healing quality, ^g thereby to shew the Jews (in a typical manner,) that the messenger of the covenant was ‘coming among them, to *open a fountain ^h to the house of ‘David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for* ‘uncleannefs;

^c Chap. ii. 1, 2.

^d Adv. Jud. c. 13.

^e John v. 4.

^f Dr Pearce’s Vindication, part 4.

^g Whitby’s Annotations

on John v. 4.

^h Zech. xiii. 1.

‘uncleannefs; but that, inſtead of giving him a kind reception, they took counſel together how they might take away his life, which made him withdraw himſelf from them, and, upon his departure, the miraculous virtue of the water ceaſed.’ The only objection againſt this hypotheſis is, that it makes the miracle of no more than a week or ten days continuance, which is too ſhort a ſpace for ſo great a company (as is here repreſented) to be gathered together; to have taken up their abode (as it were) in the apartments of this hoſpital; and to be acquainted ſo perfectly (as the paralytic, in his diſcourſe with our Saviour, ſeems to be) with the nature of the pool, and the manner of its preternatural perturbation. And therefore, (to follow the generality of commentators,) though we ſhould ſuppoſe, that its medicinal virtue began at the time of this ſecond paſſover, yet we may ſtill adhere to the opinion of Tertullian, and ſay, that, at certain times at leaſt, it continued with the Jews (and a ſingular bleſſing it was) until they had filled the meaſure of their iniquity, ¹ by denying the holy One, and the juſt, and by killing the Prince of life.

How the waters of this pool came by their ſanative quality, opinions, in ſome meaſure, have been divided. Our learned Hammond (who ſometimes affects a ſingularity of interpretation) ſuppoſes, that the waters became medicinal by being impregnated with an healing warmth from the blood and entrails of the ſacrificed beaſts that were waſhed there, and that the angel in the text is not to be underſtood of any of thoſe celeftial beings that are uſually diſtinguiſhed by that name, but only of a common meſſenger, *viz.* an officer or ſervant of the prieſts, who, at a proper ſeaſon, was ſent by him to ſtir the pool. The great Bartholine ſuppoſes, that theſe waters were naturally medicinal, and that their commotion was occaſioned by an extraordinary fermentation of ſome mineral in them; and therefore he makes the angel no more than a divine power, which originally gave this efficacy, though it was exerted in a natural way. But beſides that the word *ἀγγελος* ſeldom occurs in the former, and never in this ſenſe, in any hiſtorical narrative in Scripture, there are theſe plain objections againſt both hypotheſes, *viz.* ^m That, be the

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waters

¹ Acts iii. 14. 15. ^k Annotations on the 5th chapter of St John. ^l De paralytics N. Teſt. ^m Whitby's Annotations; and Biſhop Smallbrooke's Vindication, p. 507.

A. M.
4035, &c.
Ann Dom
31, &c.
from Matt
xii 1.
Mark ii, 28.
Luke vi. 1.
John v. 1.
to Matth.
xviii 14.
Mark ix.
14 Luke
ix 37.
John vii. 1.

waters impregnated with what ingredient we please, (had their operation been mechanical,) they must necessarily have cured more than one person, at every commotion or fermentation; and yet they never can be supposed of efficacy enough to cure all manner of diseases, in an instant, and at one single immersion, as the waters of Bethesda are represented to do: And therefore, waving all such groundless suppositions, we may be allowed to set the authority of an ancient father of the church against these modern names, and say, 'That the angel, which descended at a certain season, gave the water its medicinal virtue; for the nature of the water was not sanative in itself (if it had, cures would have always happened,) but the whole depended on the virtue communicated to it by the angel.'

Why it cured but one at once.

Now the true reason why the virtue thus communicated to the water by the operation of an angel, was effectual only to the curing of one person at one time, was to evince the miraculousness of the cure. Had many been cured at once, the sceptic might have imputed their cures to the natural virtue of the water, and, upon this supposition, been emboldened to ask, 'Where is the wonder of this? Do not many medicinal baths cure various kinds of diseases, and multitudes of such as labour under each disease, provided their case be curable? Had one only indeed been cured, the first that could get in after the troubling of the water, there would have been then a great and real miracle: But now the numbers make the fact suspicious. To make it appear a miracle indeed, its effects should have been confined and limited to particular times, and persons, and otherwise so circumstantiated, as that the power of God, and not of blind nature, might have been apparent in it.' But all this language is effectually silenced by the method which the wise providence of God took in this case, and the miracle established upon such evident conviction, as the mouth of infidelity itself cannot gainsay.

The raising the widow's son, and Jairus's daughter, both real miracles.

That the widow of Naim's son, and the ruler of the synagogue's daughter, were both of them really dead, is evident from the sense of all that were about them, who were actually carrying the one to his burial, and making preparation for the funeral of the other; so that had not our Blessed Saviour been confident of the divine virtue residing in him, whereby he was able to recover them to life again, it would have been madness in him to have attempted to do it.

He,

‘ He might suppose, perhaps, that there was a mistake
 ‘ in the people that were about them, and that these two
 ‘ young persons might possibly be in a lethargic state.’
 But, besides the folly of presuming upon a thing, which
 scarce happens once in a century, how could he tell, that,
 upon his touching the bier of the one, or the hand of the
 other, and calling upon them, they would instantly awake?
 And if they did not awake at his call, his whole preten-
 sions of being a prophet sent from God, with a power to
 restore life to the dead, must as effectually have been ruin-
 ed, as if the persons here supposed in a lethargy only, had
 actually been dead. But now, if we examine a little into
 our Lord’s conduct in both these cases, we shall find that he
 acted not upon any supposition of mistake in the people,
 but out of the fulness of the Godhead that dwelt in him
 bodily. He, coming to the city of Naim, attended with
 his disciples, meets at the gate the funeral of a certain
 young man, the only son of a woman that was a widow.
 The consideration of her destitute condition moved his
 compassion indeed; but, for all that, he might have let
 the funeral pass. None of the company either asked or
 challenged him to raise the dead youth: It was entirely
 his own offer; and an offer that no wise man, who set up
 for a prophet, would have ever made, had he not been con-
 scious (as we find he was) that he was able to perform it.

While he was at Capernaum, a person of some note re-
 quests of him to go and heal his daughter, who was at the
 point of death. Before he could get to the house, a mes-
 senger comes, and acquaints the father that she was ac-
 tually dead. ⁿ Here our Lord had a fair opportunity to
 excuse himself; for, though he might pretend to cure dis-
 eases, (which was all that Jarius requested of him,) yet it
 did not therefore follow that he was to raise the dead. But,
 instead of retracting, he offers, of his own accord, to go
 forward, and tells the father, (as he afterwards did,) that
 he would raise her to life again: ^o *Be not afraid; only be-
 lieve, says he, and she shall be made whole*; which he could
 never have said from any other principle than a conscious-
 ness of that ^p *almighty power whereby he is able to subdue all
 things to himself*.

But, though our Lord was conscious of his divine power, ^{Why our}
 yet, ^{Saviour}
 charged her
 parents to
 conceal the
 latter.

ⁿ Defence of the Scripture history, p. 17.
 viii. 50.

^p Phil. iii. 21.

^o Luke

A. M. yet, upon his coming to the ruler's house, instead of making any ostentatious boast of it, we find him, by the modesty of his expression, the *maid is not dead, but sleepeth*, endeavouring to conceal it. It is, in a great measure, indeed, owing to his modesty, and great humility, that, instead of proclaiming, he requires the people so frequently to suppress the fame of his marvellous works: But, in the present case, he might have some regard to the character of Jarius, as ruler of the synagogue, and, by this advice of silence, dispense with his speaking publicly of a miracle, which might possibly draw the malice of the scribes and Pharisees upon him, as well as upon himself. In the case of his raising Lazarus, we find, that, ^a *because, by reason of him many of the Jews went away, and believed on Jesus, the chief priests consulted, not only how to destroy Jesus, but to put Lazarus likewise to death*: And much of the same design might have been suspected, (which our Saviour, by this kind caution, endeavoured to prevent,) if it once came to their knowledge, that so great a man as a governor of a synagogue, by the miraculous recovery of his daughter, had forsaken the religion of his ancestors, and was become a convert to the Christian faith.

No injury in the destruction of the swine of Gadara. Gadara was one of the cities beyond Jordan, belonging to the country called *Decapolis*, which was sometimes in the hands of the Jews, and sometimes of the Syrians, but, at this time, was inhabited by both. The Syrians were Heathens, and, consequently, made use of swine, not only for food, but for sacrifices likewise: And it is not improbable, that the Jews of the country might be tempted to feed swine, by the advantage they made in selling them to their Heathen neighbours. ^r This was against a prohibition of their law, it is true; but laws, we know, are not always observed, and perhaps least of all at Gadara, which, being in the extremities of the Jewish territories, and under the jurisdiction of Heathens, left the Jews without any restraint upon them, but that of conscience, which is too frequently violated for the sake of gain.

To bring the matter then to a narrow compass. The swine which were destroyed, in consequence of the permission which our Saviour gave the evil spirits to enter into them, belonged either to the Jews, or Gentiles of Gadara:

^a John xii. 10. 11.

^r Dr Pearce's Vindication, part 2.

Gadara : If they belonged to the Jews, it cannot be denied, but they were justly punished for breaking their own laws and constitutions, which forbade them to keep any ; nor can our Saviour's right of inflicting the punishment be called in question, because it was a received maxim among the Jews, that any person invested with the character of a prophet, and acting by the Spirit of God, might, without the assistance of a magistrate, put the laws in execution against offenders : And therefore, we, who acknowledge our Jesus to have been more than a prophet, can never be at a loss to account for his exercising an authority among the Jews, which (according to their own confession) was allowable in the lowest of that order. But, if the Heathens of Gadara were the owners of these swine, our Saviour might be induced to permit the devils to enter into them, not only to teach them the sacredness of the Jewish laws, which they, on account of the prohibition of swine's flesh, may be supposed to have ridiculed ; but to cure them likewise of their idolatrous worship of demons, and to engage them to embrace the Christian faith. For when they saw our Lord's power over such a multitude of devils, exhibited in their possession of such a number of swine, (had they made a right application of the miracle,) they could not but perceive the truth and divinity of his doctrine, and the madness of their worshipping such impure spirits, as were both cast out of the men at his command, and could not enter into the swine without his permission.

They could not but perceive, I say, that our Saviour was a prophet sent from heaven ; that what he did was by a commission from God ; and, consequently, that he could not be guilty of any injustice in the destruction of the swine, which, upon this supposition, was not his act, but the act of providence. He indeed, as a man, had no right to destroy the people's swine ; but God, who is the supreme proprietor of the whole earth, most certainly had ; and shall we then complain of him for such a punishment as this, when every day we see more surprising instances before our eyes ? When we see him laying whole nations waste with pestilence, with famine ; and with earthquakes, shall we confess his sovereign authority in these cases, and yet, upon the loss of two thousand swine, cry out, and say, Why hast thou done this ? The Heathens themselves (upon the supposition of a providence) will acknowledge this to be unreasonable ; nor can our Saviour (as acting by

A. M.
4035, &c.
Ann Dom
37, &c.
from Mat.
xii. 1. Mark
ii. 23. Luke
vi. 1. John
v. 1
Math. xvii.
14. Mark ix.
14. Luke
x 37.
John vii. 1.



A. M.
4035. &c.
Ann Dom
31, &c.
from Matt.
xii. 1. Mark
ii. 23. Luke
vi. 1. John
v. 1. to
Matt xvii.
24. Mark
ix. 14. Luke
ix. 37. John
viii. 1.

by a divine commission, ever be justly blamed, because he once or twice did the same thing which God does every day.

But, after all, whether the proprietors were Jews or Gentiles, ^s the words in the text do not imply, that our Saviour was either principal or accessory to the destruction of the swine. St Mark, indeed, tells us, that *he gave the devils leave*; and St Luke, that *he suffered them to enter into the swine*; but by this is meant no more, than that he did not prevent them; that he did not interpose his divine power, in order to hinder them from entering; but, if this made our Saviour a sharer in the destruction of the swine, by parity of reason, it will make God (because he permits it) answerable for all the evil that is done under the sun. Thus, whether we suppose the Jews or Heathens owners of the herd of swine, our Saviour's permitting the devils to enter into them made him not accessory to their destruction; or, if it be said, that he did it with a punitive intent, it was either to make the Jews suffer for the breach of their law, or the Heathens for their obstinate idolatry; which his character of a prophet, and the testimony of his being the Son of the Most High, without all controversy, authorised him to do.

The end of
Christ's
transfigu-
ration,

To know the true end and design of our Saviour's transfiguration, it may not be improper to look back a little into the context, where we find, that after Peter's confessing him to be ^t *the Christ, the Son of the living God, from that time he began to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders, and chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day.* Nor was this all; for he foretold them, that they likewise were to suffer many grievous persecutions for his name's sake; and therefore he recommended to them the unpleasant doctrines of ^u *self-denial, and taking up the cross, and following him*, with this great (though distant) encouragement, that ^x *when the Son of Man should come in the glory of his Father, with his angels, he should reward every one according to his works.*

These predictions, doctrines, and promises, were so contrary to the expectations of his disciples, who hoped in him to have a temporal prince and deliverer, a restorer of

^s Dr Pearce's Vindication, part 1. p. 28. ^t Matt. xvi. 21. &c. ^u Ibid. ver. 24. ^x Ibid. ver. 27.

of the decayed state of Israel, and promoter of themselves to great honours and employments, that our Saviour thought proper, (not many days after,) in order to revive their faith and trust in him, and ¹ to fortify their minds against what was likely to ensue, to take as many with him into the mount, as made up a legal evidence, and there to give them ocular conviction of what he had promised, in recompense of what they were to suffer, by assuming, for a while, the lustre * and appearance of a glorified body; which so raised their drooping hearts, that we find St Peter immediately declaring, ² *Lord, it is good for us to be here; and, if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles, one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias.* For the design of these words is, not only to secure his Master, by staying in that retreat, from the sufferings and death which would be the consequence of his going up to Jerusalem, (as St Chrysostom and others understand it,) but to express likewise the pleasure and satisfaction he took in this transfiguration, and glorified company; and how he resumed fresh spirits and comforts from a miracle, which was emblematical of the glorious state, not of Christ only, but of all good Christians, after their resurrection.

The only instance we have in Scripture of any transfiguration like unto this, is in the case of Moses, ² after he had been forty days and forty nights with God on mount Sinai; for, upon his descent, we are told, *that the skin of his face so shone, that the children of Israel were afraid to come nigh him; and therefore he put a veil on his face, while he talked with them.* That our Blessed Lord, in the act of his transfiguration, might probably have respect to this preceding one of Moses, and, both in the nature of

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¹ Young's Sermons, vol. 2. p. 360.

* This is the proper meaning of the word *μεταμορφωθῆναι*. For *μορφή*, both in the Old and New Testament, doth not signify the essence or constituent properties of a man, but only his external shape or appearance: As when it is said of Belsazzar Dan. v. 10), and of Daniel, (chap. viii. 28) that *ἡ μορφή ἠλλιώθη*, *their forms were changed*; of Nebuchadnezzar, that *ἡ μορφή μου ἐπέστρεψεν ἐπ' ἐμέ*, *my form returned to me*, (Dan. iv. 36) and of Christ that he appeared to two disciples *ἐν ἑτέρᾳ μορφῇ ἐν ἄλλῃ μορφῇ*, Mark xvi. 12.) and therefore the word which is derived from it, can extend no further than to a change of the outward form or appearance only; *Whitby* on Phil. ii. 6.

² Luke ix. 33.

³ Exod. xxxiv. 28. &c.

- A. M.
 435, &c.
 Ann Dom
 31, &c.
 from Matt.
 xii. 1. Mark
 ii. 23 Luke
 vi. 1. John
 v. 1. to
 Matt. xvii.
 14. Mark.
 ix. 14. Luke
 ix. 37. John
 vii. 1.

Why the
 three apo-
 stles, and
 not the
 multitude,
 admitted to
 it.

the change; and the place where it was wrought, design some conformity thereunto, is what we are at liberty to suppose; and consequently can account why the scene of this transaction was in a mountain, rather than a valley: And why the three apostles, Peter, James, and John, and not the whole multitude, were allowed to be spectators of it, we have several reasons to alledge.

For besides that this was a vouchsafement, fit only to be communicated to such as were of his more immediate confidence, and stood in the highest degree of his esteem; to such as, for their zeal and affection to him, were honoured and distinguished^b with a peculiar title, and, after his resurrection, appointed by providence to be the great pillars of his church; and besides, that it would have looked like vanity and ostentation in him to have taken the multitude into the mount, and there made a public sight of his miracles, which was the thing he always carefully delined: Besides this, I say, there seems to be something in the transfiguration itself, which might have been of dangerous consequence for the multitude to have been admitted to.

Shewn,
 from the
 nature of it.

St Peter, who himself was one of those who were with him on the holy mount, gives us this account of it. ^c *We have not followed cunningly devised fables, says he, when we made known unto you the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye-witnesses of his majesty; for he received from God the Father, honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Now, ^d by his majesty in this place, most properly is to be understood that lustre and radiancy wherein he appeared, when his face shone as the sun, and his garments (pierced through with the beams that were darted from his body) became white as light: ^e For to shine as the sun, is a phrase expressing something belonging to celestial majesty; and white and splendid garments are proper for kings, and ^f royal ministers of the heavenly court. And, in like manner, by the excellent glory, from whence the voice proceeded, can be meant nothing but the bright and shining cloud that then appeared, which the Jews call the *Shechinah*, and is made up (as most imagine) of an host of angels, the constant symbol*

^b Luke vi. 13.
 on 2 Pet. i. 16.

^c 2 Pet. i. 16. &c.
^e Matth. xiii. 43.

^d See Whithy
^f Rev. iii. 4.

symbol of the divine presence; and how great and magnificent this symbol is, we may, in some measure, learn from the vision of the prophet Daniel ^{4035, &c.}: *The ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like pure wool. His throne was like the fiery flames, and his wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream had issue from before him; thousands of thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him.* ^{Ann Dom 31, &c. from Matt. xii. i. Mark ii. 23. Luke vi. i. John v. 1. to Matt. xvii. 14. Mark ix. 14. Luke ix. 37. John vii. 1.}

Supposing then that this was the manner of our Saviour's transfiguration; that not only, in his own person, he was arrayed with all his glory and lustre, but had likewise an angelic host surrounding him, two of the greatest prophets of ancient ages attending him, and a voice from heaven, declaring him to be *the well-beloved Son of God*: While the multitude stood by, and saw and heard all this, it would have been almost unavoidable, but that, upon such conviction of his being the Messiah, ^h *they would have taken him by force, and made him a king.* But since (as our Saviour tells us) his ⁱ *kingdom was not of this world*, nor to come with the pomp and observation which the Jews expected; and since one of his great concerns was, that no disturbance of the civil government should be occasioned by him, or laid to his charge, he wisely made choice of three only, (but these the principal of his apostles,) to whom he exhibited a specimen of his future glory; which had he done to the multitude, it might probably have occasioned a general insurrection; and, as he came down from the mount, he charged them, *that they should tell the vision to no man, till after his resurrection.*

From the word *ὄραμα* which we render *vision*, some have supposed, that Moses and Elias were not there in their proper persons, but that the apostles, in their fancy and imagination, had only a strong idea or impression of them; or, at most, that their spectres, or some shadowy resemblance of them, only were there. Since the evangelists, however, speak of them in a personal character and capacity; since they represent them, as talking with Christ, and speaking of his decease, which he was to accomplish at Jerusalem; since they tell us, that when they were come out of the extasy into which this vision had cast them, they saw two men standing with him; it is

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much

^g Dan. vii. 9. 10.^h John vi. 15.ⁱ Ibid. xviii. 36.

A. M. much more probable to think, that Moses and Elias were
 4035, &c. really there, and that God had, somewhere or other, from
 Ann Dom the time of their departure out of this world, preserved
 31, &c. both their bodies to this end. The Scriptures, indeed, are
 from Matt. express as to Elias, that he was translated into heaven by
 xii. 1. the ministry of angels resembling ^k a chariot of fire, and
 Mark ii. 23. horses of fire; and it is a pretty general opinion, ^l both
 Luke vi. 1. among Jewish and Christian authors, taken (as is supposed)
 John v. 1. from some apocryphal book, that Moses did not die, but
 to Matth. 1. was translated into heaven, or some terrestrial paradise, in
 xvii. 14. the same manner as were Enoch and Elias. There is a pas-
 Mark x. 14. sage in St Jude, where ^m Michael the archangel is said to
 ix 37. 1 contend with the devil, and dispute about the body of Mo-
 John vii ses which (if taken in a literal sense) will greatly favour
 this opinion; for if we can but suppose that ⁿ the con-
 test between this good and evil angel concerning Moses'
 body, related not to its burial, (as some will have it,) but
 its assumption into heaven, or some other place of happi-
 ness, which the devil might oppose, and urge the obliga-
 tion of his dying the common death of all men, for this
 reason more especially, because he had once taken away the
 life of an Egyptian: If we can but suppose, I say, that the
 contest arose upon this subject, then we may easily conceive
 both how Moses might subsist in a separate state from the
 time of his assumption, and how he, together with Elias,
 might be dispatched from thence upon this occasion, to set
 off the lustre of our Lord's transfiguration, by their appear-
 ing at the same time in their resplendent robes of glory.

And what
 subjects
 they dis-
 cussed on.

And indeed, if this was the purpose of their errand,
 what subject can we suppose so proper, and so well be-
 coming the conversation of three such illustrious persons,
 as the redemption of mankind by the death and passion of
 the Son of God? what these two ancient prophets had in
 their times imperfectly revealed, nay what the angels of
 heaven desire at all times to look into, viz. the harmo-
 ny of the divine attributes in this stupenduous work,
 ° the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and know-
 ledge of God, and ² the breadth, and length, and depth,
 and height, of the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge;
 ³ mysteries which have been hid from ages, and from ge-
 nerations,

^k 2 Kings ii. 11. ^l Vid. Dissert. de Calmet sur la mort et la
 sepulture de Moyse, vol. 3. ^m Jude, ver. 9. Vid. Whitby
 in locum. ° Rom. xi. 33. ^p Eph. iii. 18, 19. ^q Col. i. 26.

nerations, but are now made manifest to the saints : These were the sublime subjects (for these are implied in ^r their speaking of Christ's decease) of their conversation at this interview ; and, in comparison of these, how jejune and worthless are all the wise sayings of philosophers, or compositions of human wit ? With good reason, therefore, might the great apostle of the Gentiles, (who himself was no mean proficient in what the world falsely calls knowledge,) instead of the ^s excellence of speech and wisdom, determine to know nothing among his Corinthians, but *Jesus Christ, and him crucified* : For ^r we preach Christ crucified, says he, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness ; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God ; for ^u of God he is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.

The Scriptures, upon all occasions, acquaint us, that the Baptist, through the whole course of his ministry, had borne constant and ample testimony to our Saviour's divine mission ; that he exhorted those who came to him to rest their faith, not on himself, but on him that should come after him ; and that as soon as he was acquainted who he was, by a visible descent of the Holy Ghost, and a voice from heaven, he made it his business to dispose the Jews in general, and his own disciples in particular, to receive and reverence him, by testifying every where, that he was the Son of God, the Lamb of God, who came from above, and spake the words of God, and to whom God had not given the Spirit by measure. And yet after all this, ^x some are of opinion, that the Baptist might have the same conception of Christ's temporal kingdom that the rest of the Jewish nation had ; and that his long and irksome imprisonment might by this time have tempted him to doubt, whether he, who by birth was his relation, and from whose assistance, very probably, he expected a deliverance, was in reality the Messiah. ^r It seems, however, not a little injurious to the character of the Baptist, to suppose either his constancy so shaken, or his behaviour so inconsistent with itself, as, after such open and solemn declaration, to admit of any doubt, whether our Lord were he that should come, *i. e.* the long promised and universally expected Messiah.

^r Luke ix. 31.^s 1 Cor. ii. 1. 2.^t Ibid. i. 23.^u Ibid. ver. 30.^x Lightfoot and Beausobre in locum.^r Stanhope on the epistles and gospels, vol. 1.

A. M. Messiah. And therefore * the safest way is to conclude, that he did not send this message with a design to satisfy any scruples of his own, but purely for the sake and conviction of his disciples who brought it; to set them right in their notions, and confirm them in the belief of Jesus, and so turn them over to their proper and better master, now that himself was upon the point of leaving the world. And this was the rather necessary, because their immoderate zeal, and partial respect for the Baptist, had hitherto made them averse to Jesus, and envious at his honour and miracles. What John had discoursed to them formerly upon this subject had made but little impression upon them; and therefore, in compassion to their infirmities, he condescended to have their scruples propounded in his own name: And our Saviour's method of resolving them (which was by shewing them that the miracles which he wrought were the same in kind that the Messiah was to do) gave so great satisfaction, that when their former master was gone, they repaired to him with the melancholy news of his death, and (according to the received tradition) for ever after became his constant disciples.

Our Saviour's parables agreeable to the eastern way of reasoning.

† The frequent use of parables and emblems in the discourses

* There are three other opinions which have their followers among the ancients. One is mentioned by the author of the *Questions*, that go under the name of *Justin Martyr*, viz. That the Baptist was not in the least doubtful whether Jesus was the true Messiah, but only was desirous to know, whether he, of whom he had heard so many wonderful things, (whilst under confinement, and unable to satisfy himself,) was the same person of whom he had given testimony, and declared to be the Messiah. Others think that the meaning of the question was. Whether Jesus should die for the redemption of mankind? But surely he who long before had styled him the *Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world*, John i. 29. with allusion no doubt to the sacrifices slain under the Jewish law, gave sufficient intimation that he was not ignorant of this great truth. Others again imagine, that the sense of this enquiry is,—Whether Jesus should come to the Hades, or place souls departed? (whither the Baptist foreknew that himself was shortly to go) and whether he should preach his coming, and be his forerunner there, in the like manner as he had been upon earth? But this is an imagination too extravagant to receive any countenance from the present, whatever it might meet with in former ages: *Calmet's Commentary*, *Whitby's Annotations*, and *Stanhope on the epistles and gospels*, vol. 1.

† Whitby's Annotations on Matth. xiii.

courses and writings of the oriental sages, and especially of the Jewish doctors *, is so very well known, that a man must discover his ignorance, who pretends to assert that our Blessed Saviour attempted any innovation, when he first began to instruct the people in a parabolical way; since several of his discourses of this kind, particularly that ² of the rich glutton, and ^a of the foolish virgins, ^b are acknowledged to be borrowed from the writings of their Rabbins.

A. M.
4035, &c.
Ann Dom
51, &c.
from Matt.
xii. 1.
Mark ii. 23.
Luke vi. 1.
John v. 1.
to Matt.
xvii. 14.
Mark ix. 14.
Luke ix. 37.
John vii. 1.

The truth is, ^c the eastern way of reasoning was so different from that of the west, that the soundest philosophy of Greece or Rome would have been mere jargon and cant at Jerusalem. The only method of reasoning, which was agreeable to the Jewish taste, was to usher in an handsome simile, or story, apposite to the matter in hand; to apply a smart saying of some ancient worthy; or to bring good proof from their law, or ancient tradition; but to go to prove morality to them (as Plato or Tully do) from the eternal rules of justice, from the rectitude and honourableness of virtue, and the pravity and turpitude of vice,

* The Jews, above all nations, delighted in this way of reasoning. Their books, at this day, are full of such parables as our Saviour used; and are generally introduced in a form of speech not unlike his. *Wherunto shall I liken such or such a thing?* Nay, in the Talmudical treatises, such as the treatise Killaim, there is a dispute of sowing upon the rocks and stones, and of mixing wheat and tares together; and in Peah, (a tract in the Jerusalem Talmud,) there is mention made of a tree of mustard-seed, which one might climb up into, like other trees. So that our Saviour was by no means to blame, but rather highly to be commended, for pursuing this parabolical way of teaching morality, which was the most celebrated method among the Jews. For his farther vindication, however, some have observed, that what our Saviour delivered in this manner did not contain the fundamental precepts and doctrines of the gospel, (for these were taught with sufficient clearness in the 5th, 6th, and 7th chapters of St Matthew,) but only the mysteries relating to the progress of the gospel, and the event of it among the Jews and Gentiles; and the Jews themselves acknowledge, that the predictions of this nature were usually taught in allegorical and emblematical expressions, being not so necessary to be known, as were the fundamental rules of faith and manners; *Lightfoot's Harmony of the New Testament*, page 30; *Nichols's Conference*, part 3, page 413, and *Whitby's Annotations on Matth.* xiii. 10.

² Luke xvi. 19.

^a Matth. xxv. 1.

^b Shering-

ham, Præf.

^c *Nichols's Conference*, part 3, page 413.

A. M. vice, would have been such a way of talking, as the wisest
 4035. &c men of their way of education would have greatly despised;
 Ann Dom. and therefore our Blessed Saviour (who was well acquaint-
 31, &c. ed with the temper and customs of the people with whom
 from Matt. he conversed) took care that his way of instructing them
 xii. 1. should be such as was most agreeable to their education,
 Mark ii. 23. and consequently such as would tend more to their edifica-
 Luke vi. 1. tion, than if he had introduced the philosophic method of
 John v. 1. morality, which was only in use in such nations as were
 to Matth destitute of the benefits of a divine revelation.

The Heathens indeed couched their religious mysteries
 John vii. 1. under fables and allegories, out of a principle both of fear
 ~~~~~ and policy, to conceal them from the contempt of the vul-  
 And not gar, and to excite the study and curiosity of the learned.  
 obscure. But in this latter design they seem to be mistaken, because  
 the learned could no sooner look into the matters hid un-  
 der these fables, but they must have discovered their shame,  
 absurdity, and ridiculousness. The design of our Lord's  
 speaking to the people in parables was quite contrary to  
 this, as himself declares, viz. <sup>d</sup> *because they seeing see not,*  
*and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand;* which  
 words, \* both in sacred and profane authors, are a prover-  
 bial expression, concerning men so wicked and so slothful,  
 that either they attend not to, or will not follow, the clear-  
 est intimations and convictions of their duty; and there-  
 fore, to awaken their attention, and make the stronger  
 impression upon them, our Saviour was forced to have re-  
 course to parables.

This passage, indeed, in the other evangelists that men-  
 tion

<sup>d</sup> Matth. xiii. 13.

\* To this purpose the prophet Jeremiah, to a revolting and  
 rebellious people, which had cast off the fear of God, speaks  
 in this wise: *Hear now this, ye foolish people, and without under-  
 standing, which have eyes, and see not, which have ears, and hear not,*  
 chap. v. 21. And in like manner God speaks to Ezekiel: *Son  
 of man, thou dwellest in the midst of a rebellious house, which have  
 eyes to see, and see not; that have ears to hear, and hear not for they  
 are a rebellious house,* chap. xii. 2. Philo uses the phrase in the  
 same signification; for, speaking of those that were addicted  
 to wine, and sensual pleasures, he says, ὁρῶντες, ἔκ ὁρῶσι, ἔ ἀκούοντες,  
 ἔκ ἀκούσι, *They seeing see not, and hearing, do not hear;* and De-  
 mosthenes mentions it as a common proverb, ὁρῶντας, μὴ ὁρῶν,  
 καὶ ἀκούοντας, μὴ ἀκούαν; *Whitby's Annotations on Matth. x.*

tion it, seems to bear a different sense, <sup>c</sup> *unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables, that seeing they may see, and not perceive, and hearing they may hear, and not understand*: Or, as it is in St Luke, <sup>f</sup> *that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand*: As if our Lord had spoken to the multitudes in parables, *i. e.* in a plain and familiar way, on purpose that they might not understand him which, besides the contradiction, seems to include a spice of malevolence, where there never was any. <sup>g</sup> But all this is occasioned by the mistake of our translators, who, both in St Mark and St. Luke have rendered the word *ivz.* by *that*, which should have been *because*; for this gives the words a quite different turn: In St Mark, *because seeing they do see, and not perceive*, and in St Luke, *because seeing they see not, and hearing they understand not*. The natural import of which is this, — ‘That the Jews, by reason of their prejudices, not being able to understand the great mysteries of the gospel, our Saviour, out of love to their souls, accommodated himself to their capacities, by speaking to them in parables, *i. e.* in metaphors and similitudes, borrowed from things temporal and corporeal, in order to bring them to a more competent understanding, of his doctrine.’

<sup>h</sup> *To you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but not to them*, does not therefore imply, that our Saviour’s parables were dark and obscure, and that by speaking to the people in this manner, he had a design to conceal any truth that was requisite for them to know; but only, that he made a fuller discovery of his doctrine to his disciples, than it was necessary at that time to make to the multitude; that he instructed them in private, and enlarged upon the sense of his parables, and let them into the knowledge of several things, that were not yet proper to be communicated to all, because they were his peculiar friends, and his constant companions; were more disposed to receive his doctrine; were afterwards to be the preachers of it; and at length to seal the truth of it with their blood.

They were honest and well-designing men; but it would be doing too great a compliment to their understanding, to say, that there was any thing extraordinary

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(until

<sup>c</sup> Mark iv. 11. 12.  
History, in the notes.

<sup>f</sup> Chap. viii. 10.  
<sup>h</sup> Match. xiii. 11.

<sup>g</sup> Howell’s

A. M.  
455. &c.  
Ann Dom  
31, &c.  
fr m Matt.  
xiii 1.  
Markii 23.  
Luke vi. 4.  
John v. 1.  
to Matt.  
xvii 14.  
Markix 14.  
Lukeix 17.  
John vii. 1.



A. M. (until they were endued from above) in their sagacity and  
 4035. &c. penetration: And therefore, we are not to impute it to  
 Ann Dom the obscurity of our Saviour's parables, that we find his  
 31. &c. disciples so frequently at a loss for the meaning of them,  
 from Matt. (since some of them were quoted from Jewish authors, and  
 xii 1. Mark many of them taken from the most obvious and common  
 ii, 23. Luke things,) but we should rather impute it to their natural  
 vi. 1. John dulness and want of apprehension, as we find our Saviour  
 Matt. xvii. himself does, when, upon their requesting him to expound  
 14. Mark the plain parable of the sower, he could not forbear say-  
 ix. 14. ing, with admiration, <sup>i</sup> *Know ye not this parable, and how*  
 37. John *then shall ye know all parables?*  
 vii. 1.

Why he  
 would not  
 shew a sign  
 from hea-  
 ven.

It was not then to cloud and obscure, but rather illu-  
 strate and inforce his meaning, that our Lord delivered  
 himself so frequently in parables; and the reason why he  
 refused to gratify the Pharisees in their desire of a sign  
 from heaven, was, because he had already done miracles  
 enough to satisfy them, had not their obstinacy been proof  
 against all conviction. In that very chapter <sup>k</sup> wherein  
 they make this insolent demand, they had seen, before  
 their faces, <sup>l</sup> a withered hand made whole, and, <sup>m</sup> upon  
 the ejection of a devil, a blind and dumb man restored to  
 his sight and speech; but observe the turn which their re-  
 solute infidelity gives to the miracles: <sup>n</sup> *This fellow does*  
*not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub, the prince of the devils:*  
 And yet these very men have the modesty, in a few verses  
 after, to come to the person they had just before reviled  
 and blasphemed at this rate, with this arrogant demand;  
<sup>o</sup> *Master, we would see a sign from thee.* After such an af-  
 front, would it have become the meekest man upon earth  
 to gratify these men in any request whatever? But much  
 more, would it have become the majesty of the Son of  
 God to prostitute his divine power, merely to satisfy the  
 curiosity (for that was all they wanted to have satisfied) of  
 such abandoned miscreants?

The sign, which they wanted to see, may be supposed  
 to be, either such <sup>p</sup> a shower of manna, as Moses; or such  
<sup>q</sup> a clap of thunder, as Samuel; or <sup>r</sup> such a fall of fire,  
 as Elijah; or <sup>s</sup> such an arrest of the sun, as Joshua once  
 called

<sup>i</sup> Mark iv. 13.

<sup>k</sup> Matt. xii. 38.

<sup>l</sup> Ver. 13

<sup>m</sup> Ver. 22.

<sup>n</sup> Ver. 24.

<sup>o</sup> Matt. xii. 38.

<sup>p</sup> Exod.

xvi. 14.

<sup>q</sup> 1 Sam. vii. 10.

<sup>r</sup> 1 Kings xviii 38.

<sup>s</sup> Josh. x. 12.

called for. Now, supposing that our Saviour had been flexible enough to humour them in their unreasonable request, ' what grounds have we to think, that these aerial or celestial prodigies would have wrought in them any more conviction than those miracles, which were uncontested, done in their presence, within their feeling, and compass of examination? These, we see, they imputed to a diabolical power, and much more might they do it to those that were at so vast a distance, since they could not be ignorant of what is said of the prince of the power of the air in the book of Job, viz. That the fire, which fell from heaven, and consumed that holy man's substance, as well as the wind which overturned the house, where his children were met together, were the effects of Satan's procuring.

What notions the ancient Jews had of the power of magic, we cannot positively say; but it is certain, that the Heathen magicians made it their boast \*, that they could stop the course of the sun, moon, and stars, turn them into darkness, as they pleased, and make them obey their voice: And, if the Pharisees had the like notions of these things, their demanding a sign from heaven was to no manner of purpose; because, upon their own supposition, that our Lord acted by a magical power, what they desired him to do, was not above the sphere of his ability, and, if they thought so, it could never have wrought in them any good conviction; because the same hardness of heart, and hatred of him, would have kept them under the same persuasion still, that all his wonders, whether above or below, whether in heaven or on earth, whether on human or celestial bodies, were done by the assistance of the devil.

Since then no sign that the Pharisees could ask (even had our Saviour condescended to work it) would have been effectual to their conviction, our Saviour was not unkind in remitting them to one, that would not fail of convincing them, that what he did was not by a diabolical but divine power. For, since it was agreed on all hands, that a person, when dead, (whatever he had in his lifetime,) could not then have the devil at his command; if, after they had crucified him, they should find him restored to

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life

\* Calmet's Commentary on Matt. xii. 38.

\* Quæ sidera excantata voce Thessala

Lunamque cælo deripit.

Hor. in Canidiam.

The signifi-  
cance of the  
sign of Jo-  
shua.

A. M.  
4035, &c.  
Ann Dom  
31, &c.  
from Matt  
xii. 1.  
Mark ii. 13.  
Luke vi. 1.  
John v. 1.  
to Matth  
xvii. 14  
Mark ix.  
14. Luke  
ix. 37.  
John vii. 1.

life again, this would be a sign wherein there could be no fallacy; that as his restoration was from the hand of God, so his commission had all along been from the same; and <sup>u</sup> that, as Jonas's miraculous escape from the whale's belly (wherewith the Ninevites were doubtless acquainted) was a powerful means to confirm to them the truth of his prophetic office; so now, though all Christ's miracles, while living, prevailed but little, yet, after his death and resurrection from the grave, he would then be credited, in the same manner as Jonas was; <sup>\*</sup> *he would then draw all men after him*, and the very Pharisees themselves would be prevailed upon to acknowledge his divine mission. This is the sense of his comparing himself so often with the prophet Jonas: And that the chief priests and Pharisees understood the comparison in this sense, is manifest from what they say to Pilate: <sup>\*</sup> *Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again; for I no where remember, that he made any declaration to the chief priests and Pharisees (though he did it frequently to his apostles) of his intended resurrection after three days, but only in this comparison of himself to Jonas.*

Why Christ  
made choice  
of mean  
men to be  
his apostles.

Had human wisdom indeed been consulted in the election of Christ's apostles, it would have made choice of the profoundest rabbins, the acutest philosophers, and the most powerful orators, who, by the strength of reason, and arts of eloquence, might have triumphed over the minds of men, grappled with the stubbornness of the Jews, and baffled the fine notions and speculations of the Greeks and Romans; but then it must be allowed, that one argument for the proof of the divinity of the Christian religion had been lost. Nay, it might have been objected, 'That no wonder, indeed, that this religion should thrive so well in the world, when it had all human advantages to assist it, and was supported and carried on by the united force of the reason and eloquence of such renowned scholars.' But now, by making choice of weak and illiterate persons to be his apostles, and first publishers of the gospel, our Lord has taken an effectual means, that <sup>\*</sup> *our faith should not stand (as St Paul expresses it) in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God, because their speech and their preaching was not with enticing words of man's*

<sup>u</sup> Whitby's Annotations on Matt. xii. 39.

<sup>\*</sup> John xii.

32.

<sup>y</sup> Matt. xxvii. 63.

<sup>z</sup> 1 Cor. ii. 4. 5.



man's wisdom, but in the demonstration of the Spirit; and of power.

A. M.  
4035, &c.  
Ann Dom  
31. &c.  
from Matt.  
xii. 1. Mark  
ii. 23. Luke  
ii. 1. John  
v. 1. to  
Matt. xvii.  
14. Mark  
ix. 14.  
Luke ix.  
37. John  
vi. 1.

And, indeed, what less than a divine power could have enabled a few illiterate mechanics, who had no art, no address of their own, to propagate a new and unheard-of religion, contrary to the laws every where established, and contrary to man's natural passions and appetites, with such a wonderful success, as, in the space of twenty or thirty years, to extend it over all the principal parts of the Roman empire, and, in the next age, to fill all places, cities, and islands, castles and boroughs, palaces and senates, courts and camps, with multitudes of converts, as the great apologist, Tertullian, justly glories? Doubtless, if ever there was an intervention of divine power in human affairs, it was here, *when a God chose the foolish and weak things of the world to confound the wise and mighty*, and when simplicity and ignorance not only had the advantage, but absolutely triumphed over all the wit, and learning, and power, and policy of the world.

That therefore the mighty force of Christianity, to make its way through the greatest obstacles, might more evidently appear, the instruments which our Saviour employed in the propagation of it, (so far as their own abilities, either natural or acquired, were concerned,) were the meanest that can be imagined, but, by an extraordinary communication of his blessed Spirit to them, he inspired them with the gift of languages, that they might be able to address themselves to people of all nations; with the power of working miracles, that they might be able to confirm the truth of the doctrine which they taught; and, upon all emergencies, *with such a mouth and wisdom, as all their adversaries were not able to gainsay or resist*.

These, and several other gifts extraordinary, did more than supply the natural defects which the apostles laboured under in the execution of so great a work; but now that these gifts are withdrawn, our religion established, and the canon of the holy Scriptures completed, their successors have a different province to manage. Instead of travelling all the world over, and compassing sea and land to gain proselytes to the Christian faith, their duty is, to keep in order the things that are settled, and *to feed the flock of God that is among them, taking the oversight thereof, not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; not as lords over God's inheritance,*

Why learning, &c. is required in Christ's ministers now.

<sup>a</sup> Ibid. i. 27.

<sup>b</sup> Luke xxi. 15.

<sup>c</sup> 1 Pet. v. 2.

A. M.  
4035, &c.  
Ann Dom  
31, &c.  
from Matt.  
xii 1  
Mark ii. 23  
Luke vi. 1  
John v. 1.  
12 Math. 1.  
xvii. 14  
Mark ix.  
14. Luke  
ix. 37. 1.  
John vii.

heritance, but as ensamples to their flocks; and, instead of delivering to their respective churches such writings as might, in all ages, be the pillar and foundation of truth, their business is to study the Scriptures, which they have received, to defend their authority, and expound their sense; <sup>d</sup> to preach the word, (as the apostle to Timothy specifies their office;) to be instant in season, and out of season; to reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with all long-suffering and doctrine; and what compass of learning and share of influence among the people are requisite to a due discharge of all this, (as <sup>e</sup> a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of God,) wants no detail of arguments to prove, since we find the great apostle St Paul, amidst all the gifts that were then dispensed to the church, and the particular revelations which were vouchsafed him, upon the consideration of the weightiness of his office, crying out, and saying, <sup>f</sup> *Who is sufficient for these things?* Upon the whole, therefore, we may observe, that it was highly requisite, that the apostles and first publishers of the gospel, and the present ministers and preachers of it, should be men of different characters and abilities; that the former of these (for the more effectual discharge of their office) should have several kinds of gifts supernatural, the latter no more than was the product of their own labour and acquisition; or (to speak in the phrase of the Scripture) that as, at first, our Saviour <sup>g</sup> gave some apostles; some prophets; and some evangelists; so now he should appoint some rulers, some pastors, and some teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ; till we all come, in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.

Why our  
Saviour  
might be  
innocently  
angry with  
the Phari-  
sees.

<sup>h</sup> That anger, considered in itself, and upon all occasions whatever, is unlawful, neither the most rigid philosophers, nor the most severe Christians, have ever been able to prove. It is one of those passions that are implanted in us by the God of nature. The first motions of it seem to be mechanical, and the hastiness or slowness of it

<sup>d</sup> 2 Tim. iv. 2. <sup>e</sup> Ibid. ii. 15. <sup>f</sup> 2 Cor. ii. 16. <sup>g</sup> Eph. iv. 11. &c.

<sup>h</sup> Stanhope on the epistles and gospels, vol. 3.

it depends, in a great measure, upon the temper of the body, and the animal spirits: So far then as it is natural, we dare not account it criminal, for fear of making God, who hath implanted it in us, the author of sin. Those who define it *a desire of revenge*, or of doing evil to another, purely because he has done so to us, make it indeed a sinful passion, and a plain violation of that command which requires us <sup>i</sup> *not to avenge ourselves, but rather give place unto wrath*; but if it be considered <sup>k</sup> as proceeding upon a desire of obtaining satisfaction for some injury done to us, or to those for whom we are concerned, the honour of God, the reverence due to the laws, the love of virtue, and the protection of good men, may make this not only innocent, but highly necessary and commendable. There is a tameness of spirit that justly deserves censure; and in some cases we even do not well unless we are angry: And for this reason, I make no doubt it was, <sup>l</sup> that our Blessed Saviour, on some occasions, suffered himself to be seen in some degrees of this passion, namely to evince the lawfulness of it, and, by his example, to confute the doctrine of those Heathen Stoicks, who condemned the use of all passions, and were for making those natural tendencies which God has given us altogether superfluous.

For religion admits of no such paradoxical notions: When it requires us to be <sup>m</sup> slow to wrath, it allows of the passion upon a just provocation, and only blames him <sup>n</sup> *who is angry with his brother without a cause*; and when it gives us this caution, <sup>o</sup> *Be angry and sin not, let not the sun go down upon your wrath*, it supposes the thing itself warrantable, and only prohibits the excess or long duration of it. It is the rash, causeless, and continued anger, that our holy religion condemns: But who shall say, that our Saviour's resentment to the Pharisees was not upon good grounds, when they, by their traditions, had made void the moral law, excused men from doing what God had commanded, and laid upon them other unnecessary burdens, which he had nowhere enjoined? When the pride and arrogance of their sect, and their contempt and hatred of all that contradicted them, made it necessary for him to use some

<sup>i</sup> Rom. xii. 19. <sup>k</sup> Whitby's Annotations on Matth. v. 22.

<sup>l</sup> Nicholls's Conference, part 3. p. 410.

<sup>m</sup> James i. 19.

<sup>n</sup> Matth. v. 22. <sup>o</sup> Eph. 26.



A. M.  
4035. &c  
Ann Dom  
31. &c.  
from Matt  
xii. i. Mark  
ii. 23. Luke  
vi. i. John  
v. 1. to  
Matt. xvii  
24. Mark  
ix. 14.  
Luke ix.  
37. John  
vii. 1.

some smartness in his reprehensions, thereby to excite them to a sensibility of their errors? They <sup>p</sup> had consulted with the Herodians how they might destroy him; the works which he did by the finger of God, they had ascribed to a diabolical power; and therefore no wonder that he should look upon them with indignation, because of the hardness of their hearts. But when there was no such cause for any degree of anger, and where the glory of God was not immediately concerned, his whole life was the most perfect pattern of meekness and patience, according to that prediction concerning him, <sup>q</sup> *He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the streets, a bruised reed shall he not break, and a smoking flax shall he not quench.*

What is  
meant by  
our Savi-  
our's be-  
ing beside  
himself.

But how comes it then, that St Mark, in his gospel, represents our Saviour a person that was supposed <sup>r</sup> to be beside himself? Various are the significations which are given to the word *ἑξῆς* in this place; but there are three that bid fairest for the solution of that difficulty. <sup>s</sup> In the preceding verse it is said, that the multitude came so fast upon him, that he had not time to take any food to recruit his spirits; and thereupon some interpreters would have the word signify his fainting through hunger, or being in danger of falling into a deliquium by spending his spirits, and taking no manner of refreshment to revive them. <sup>t</sup> Others had rather mean by the word such an extasy, or transport of mind, as those who are moved with a vehement zeal, or prophetic spirit, are wont to be affected with; and consequently that his friends, apprehensions were, that, in the execution of his prophetic office, *i. e.* in his preaching and instructing the people, he expended his strength too much, forgetful of that care and preservation which he ought to have had of himself. But for my part I cannot see why the word may not here be taken in its common and ordinary sense, for what is called *madness* and *distraction*. We acknowledge, indeed, that our Lord, neither in his actions or gestures, shewed ever any symptoms of a disordered mind: nor could his relations, from any behaviour of his, conceive any such thing of him: but then the words in the text *ἔλεγον γάρ*, *for they said*, may

<sup>p</sup> Mark iii. 6.

<sup>s</sup> Whitby in locum.

<sup>q</sup> Isa. xlii. 2, 3.

<sup>r</sup> Hammond's Annotations.

<sup>t</sup> Mark iii. 21.

may not relate to his friends, but to other people who had raised this report of him. The Pharisees had given out that he had a devil, and did all these miracles by a confederacy with him: and others who did not run to this length of blasphemy, said nevertheless, that he was mad, and his head turned; and when this came to his friends ears, they, out of a charitable design perhaps, went to apprehend him, supposing that he might possibly be under some such disorder; and not rightly understanding the end of his mission, as the evangelist <sup>a</sup> informs us that some of his kindred did not believe in him. And indeed, <sup>\*</sup> if we consider with ourselves how common a thing it is to look upon those who think or speak, or act in a manner different from other people, as fools and madmen; how this was the fate <sup>1</sup> of the young prophet before Jehu's companions, and of St Paul <sup>2</sup> before Festus; we shall not think it strange that our Lord should fall under the same opprobrious imputation, or that his relations, (who had no true conception of him or his office,) hearing of this rumour, should endeavour to get him into their custody, and so prevent his exposing himself to the scorn and derision of those that hated him. For though some of the people were of opinion, that *he spake as never man spake*, <sup>a</sup> yet many of them said, *he has a devil, and is mad, why hear ye him?*

A. M.  
4035, &c.  
Ann. Dom.  
31, &c.  
from Matt.  
xlii. 1.  
Mark ii. 23.  
Luke vi. 1.  
John v. 1.  
10 Matt.  
xvii. 14.  
Mark ix. 14.  
Luke ix.  
37 John  
vii. 1



The name of Peter or Cephas, (as it is in the Syriac,) our Blessed Lord gave to Simon, when his brother Andrew first brought them together; and in allusion to this name it is, that he calls him the *rock*, or *stone*, upon which he intended to build his church. Some indeed by this *rock* think, that our Saviour intends himself, <sup>b</sup> and that, in uttering these words, he pointed at his own person, as he seems to have done upon another like occasion, when he speaks to the Jews, <sup>c</sup> *destroy this temple*, (meaning his own body,) *and in three days I will raise it up*: But the sense seems abstruse, and the transition abrupt, that our <sup>d</sup> Saviour, speaking to Peter, and calling him a *rock*, should, with the same breath, pass to himself, and yet not say, *upon myself* but *upon this rock*, (and Peter was the

Christ's  
promise to  
Peter ex-  
plained.

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<sup>a</sup> John vii. 5.      <sup>\*</sup> Calmet's Commentary in locum.  
<sup>1</sup> 2 Kings ix. 11.      <sup>2</sup> Acts xvi. 24      <sup>a</sup> John x. 20.  
<sup>b</sup> Stanhope on the epistles and gospels, vol. 4.      <sup>c</sup> John  
ii. 19.      <sup>d</sup> Pool's Annotations on Matth. xvi. 18.

A. M.  
4035, &c.  
Ann Dom  
31, &c.  
from Matt.  
xii 1.  
Mark ii, 23  
Luke vi. 1.  
John v. 1.  
to Matth.  
xviii 14.  
Mark ix.  
14. Luke  
ix. 37.  
John vii. 1.

only rock he mentioned,) *will I build my church.* Others therefore would rather have St Peter's faith and confession to be the rock here spoken of, as it must be acknowledged indeed, that, in this confession of his, the sum and substance of the Christian doctrine is comprised; but then it should be considered, that as our Lord, without all doubt, meant to say something singular to St Peter, as a reward of his frank confession of him, if this confession was all the rock he intended, here was nothing particular said to the apostle, and yet, at the same time, the whole grace of the allusion to his name was entirely lost. It is reasonable therefore to think, <sup>e</sup> that as our Saviour here directs his speech, not to the whole college of the apostles, but to St Peter only, and seems to promise him something peculiar as the reward of his liberal confession, the sense of the expression should be, that he would, in a more eminent manner, make use of his ministry, in laying the first foundation of the Christian church, both among the Jews and Gentiles, as we find he did the former, <sup>f</sup> in his most efficacious sermon at the day of Pentecost, and the latter, <sup>g</sup> in the conversion of Cornelius and his company.

What is  
meant by  
the Keys of  
the king-  
dom of hea-  
ven.

There is a passage in Isaiah, which (as some imagine) helps us to the knowledge of what our Saviour means by *the keys of the kingdom of heaven*; it is where God foretels Eliakim, <sup>h</sup> that he *will call him and clothe him with the robe of Shebna (who <sup>i</sup> was over the household,) and strengthen him with his girdle, and commit his government into his hand and lay the key of the house of David \* upon his shoulder, &c.* Now, because the key was an ensign of great honour and power, and what the chief stewards in princes palaces usually wore, as an indication of their office, our Saviour makes use of this expression, to denote that authority and jurisdiction wherewith he invested the apostles and their successors in the administration of the affairs of his church. But, besides the key of government, there

<sup>e</sup> Whitby's Annotations in locum.    <sup>f</sup> Acts ii.    <sup>g</sup> Ibid.  
<sup>x.</sup>    <sup>h</sup> Isa. xxii. 20.    <sup>i</sup> Ibid. ver. 15.

\* This custom of carrying keys upon men's shoulders may seem very strange to us: but the ancients had their keys made very large, and in the form of a sickle, and the weight and shape of them was such, that they could no otherwise be carried conveniently, but as we see our reapers carry their sickles; *Calmet's Dictionary* under the word *Key*.



there is <sup>k</sup> the key of knowledge, which the scribes and Pharisees are blamed for having taken away; and therefore as the use of a key is to open a door or gate, we should rather think the import of Christ's promise here to Peter is, <sup>l</sup> that he should be the person who should first open the mysteries of the gospel-dispensation, both to Jew and Gentile; by the power of his preaching, make the first converts among both; and, by the rite of baptism, receive such converts into the pale of the Christian church: And by the *binding* and *loosing* which follow, (though \* some are willing to extend them to the power of excommunication and absolution,) I should rather be inclined to think, that, according to the language then in use among the Jews, our Saviour means the forbidding or permitting such and such things; that <sup>m</sup> he is here declaring his will, that his apostles should settle the affairs of his church by virtue of their infallible Spirit; should determine what was lawful or unlawful for Christians to do, and that such their determina-

A. M.  
4235. &c.  
Ann Dom  
31, &c.  
from  
Matth. xii.  
1. Mark ii.  
23. Luke  
vi. 1.  
John v. 1.  
to Matth.  
xvii. 24.  
14. Mark  
ix. 14.  
Luke ix.  
37. John  
vii. 1.

3 P 2

tions

\* Luke xi. 52. <sup>l</sup> Whitby's Annotations on Matth. xvi. 19.

\* This indeed is the common acceptance of the words; and our learned Archbishop Potter, in his discourse of church-government, chap. 5. looks upon this *binding* and *loosing*, when applied to things and not persons, not only as a manifest force upon the words, which the Scriptures never use in any such sense, but false in fact likewise, because the apostles had no power either to make or declare any thing to be unlawful, which was not before made and declared by Christ to be so: And therefore though he owns, that, in the text, *things* and not *persons* are expressed, yet he nevertheless affirms, that it is very common to put adjectives of the neuter gender, instead of substantives, and so to express *things* when *persons* are understood. This manner of expressing substantives by neuter adjectives, can hardly be contested; but then we cannot but think, that the word *binding*, when put for imposing laws or injunctions upon us, is no uncommon phrase in Scripture, since we find our Saviour complaining of the scribes and Pharisees, for *binding heavy burdens, and grievous to be borne and laying them on other men's shoulders*, Matth. xxiii. 4. Nor can we see how the apostles (who had no precept from their Master to that purpose) could have absolved proselytes from the observation of the Jewish law, Acts xv. 28, 29. had they not had power and authority given them by the Holy Ghost, to *declare some things which Christ had not declared before*.

<sup>m</sup> Pool's Annotations on Matth. xvi. 18.

A. M.  
4035. &c  
Ann Dom  
31. &c.  
from Matt.  
xii. 1.  
Mark ii. 23.  
Luke vi. 1.  
John v. 1.  
to Matt.  
xvii. 14.  
Mark ix. 14.  
Luke ix. 37.  
John vii. 1

tions should be ratified in heaven: '*Whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth*, i. e. declare to be forbidden, shall expose the man that commits it to punishment; and *whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth*, or declare to be lawful now, (tho' formerly forbidden,) shall be allowed to be done, without any one's incurring my displeasure.' So that in this sense the words are a foundation of our faith and obedience to the doctrines and commands of the apostles, and of the cessation of the ritual precepts of the law of Moses.

According to this exposition, the sense of our Lord's promise to Peter (supposing it personal, and directed to him only) will be this: 'Thy name signifies a *rock*, and, suitable to that name shall be thy work and office; for upon thee, i. e. upon the strength of thy preaching, shall the foundation of my church be laid. Thee I will appoint to make the first converts, both of Jews and Gentiles, to my holy religion, and, by the ordinance of baptism to admit them into the communion of saints; and to thee I will give power to enact laws, for the good government of my church; to determine what is proper or improper to be done, and to release my people from the observation of legal ceremonies.'

Which  
gives him  
no superiority  
over  
the other  
apostles.

This is the full force of our Saviour's speech to Peter; and yet it neither denotes nor implies any oecumenical, pastoral power in him (much less in his successors) above the rest of the apostles. For, if he be here called the *rock*, or *foundation-stone*, the same honour is attributed to the rest, where it is said, that *we are built upon the foundation of the prophets and apostles, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone*. If he had the power of the keys intrusted with him, and thereby admitted the first converts, both Jews and Gentiles, into the Christian church; both James and John exercised the same office, in converting those of the circumcision; and St Paul opened the kingdom of heaven to many more Gentiles than ever he did. If he had authority to discharge the converts he made from the observation of the ceremonial law, St Paul, without doubt, had the same with regard to this, and perhaps a clearer notion of the Christian liberty, than St Peter seems to have had, when

▪ Whitby, Ibid.

° Eph. ii. 20.

when he gave occasion to the other to <sup>P</sup> withstand him to the face, and so frequently to declare, *that we are not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ*: And, whatever the sense of binding and loosing may be, it is certain, that the same power and authority was given, in as ample a manner to all the apostles in general, where it is said, <sup>q</sup> *Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven*: And again <sup>r</sup> *Whatsoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them, and whatsoever sins ye retain, they are retained*. So wisely did our Blessed Saviour settle an <sup>\*</sup> equality among his apostles, that <sup>s</sup> *there might be no schism in his church*, but that <sup>t</sup> *in him all the building fitly framed together*, (as the apostle continues the metaphor) *might grow unto an holy temple in the Lord*!

A. M.  
4035, &c.  
Ann Dom  
31, &c.  
from  
Mat. xii. 1.  
Mark ii. 13.  
Luke vi. 1.  
John v. 1.  
to Matth.  
xvii. 14.  
Mark ix.  
14, Luke  
ix. 37.  
John vii. 2.

Nothing

<sup>P</sup> Gal. ii. 11. 16.      <sup>q</sup> Matth xviii.      <sup>r</sup> John xx. 23.

<sup>\*</sup> It is certain, that the rest of the apostles did not conceive any peculiar power or pre-eminence to have been given to Peter, because, after this promise made to him, James and John desired to be next in dignity to our Lord; as also among them and the other apostles there was a contention who should be the greatest; which could not well have happened, if they had understood that this honour had been already granted to Peter. It cannot be denied, indeed, but that some of the apostles were superior to others, both in personal merit and order of place. St Paul speaks of some, *viz.* James, Peter, and John, who seemed to be pillars, Gal. ii. 9. *i. e.* principal supporters of the church, and were accounted chief apostles, 2 Cor. xi. 5. and it is remarkable, that in all the catalogues of the twelve apostles which are extant in the Scriptures, Peter is constantly placed the first, as Judas is the last: From whence we may observe, that, as Judas, who kept the bag, and was a thief, John xii. 6. was last of all the twelve, so Peter, who had the first place, does all along, through the whole history of the gospels, shew a greater zeal for our Lord's honour and service than any of the rest; *vid* page 447. in the notes. But, whatever might be the true reason of this order, it is certain that nothing more was founded on it than a mere priority of place; and that neither Peter, nor any other apostle, had any power or authority over the rest, according to that of St Cyprian *De unitate ecclesiæ. Hoc erant utique et ceteri apostoli, quod fuit Petrus, pari consortio præditi honoris et potestatis*; Archbishop Potter's Discourse of church government, chap. 3.

<sup>s</sup> 1 Cor. xii. 25.

<sup>t</sup> Eph. ii. 21.



A. M. Nothing certainly can be plainer in Scripture, than that  
 4035. &c the sin against the Holy Ghost, which our Saviour men-  
 Ann Dom tions as a sin unpardonable, is to be understood of the  
 31, &c. Pharisees imputing the miracles, which he wrought by the  
 from Mat. power of the Holy Ghost; to the power of the devil; and  
 xlii. 2 Mark yet, I know not how, a great many learned men have  
 ii. 23. Luke made shift to mistake it. <sup>u</sup> A denial of Christ's divinity,  
 vi. 1. Jhn a denial of his religion for fear of suffering, a wilful oppo-  
 Matt. xvi. sition to the truth, a malicious envying other men's graces,  
 14. Mark gross relapses into sin, or final impenitence, and perseve-  
 ix. 14 Luke rance therein, have, some by one, and some by others,  
 ix 37. John been made the characteristics of this sin; and yet the very  
 vii. 1. occasion of our Saviour's discourse concerning it cannot  
 but give us quite different conceptions.

Several no-  
 tions about  
 the sin a-  
 gainst the  
 Holy Ghost  
 What it  
 really is.

<sup>x</sup> He had just now healed one possessed of a devil, blind  
 and dumb, whereat, the people were much amazed, and  
 began to say among themselves, *Is not this the son of David?*  
 i. e. the promised Messiah: Which when the Pharisees  
 understood, they gave this vile and malicious turn to the  
 miracle, *This fellow does not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub,*  
*the prince of the devils.* This calumny our Saviour under-  
 took to confute, by shewing how unlikely a thing it was,  
 that the devil should lend him his power to use it against  
 himself; and then proceeds to discourse of this sin, <sup>y</sup> *Where-*  
*fore I say unto you, all manner of sin and blasphemy (which is of*  
*another nature) shall be forgiven unto men, but the blasphemy*  
*against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto them.* The  
 Pharisees therefore are the persons charged with the sin,  
 and the sin is, their attributing what was done by the sin-  
 ger of God to a diabolical power.

Dr. Whit-  
 by's notion  
 groundless.

<sup>z</sup> A learned annotator of our own is of opinion, that,  
 though our Saviour entered upon this discourse, because  
 the Pharisees imputed his miracles to a confederacy with  
 Satan, yet his chief design was to deter his hearers from  
 blaspheming the ensuing dispensation of the Holy Ghost,  
 which, upon his resurrection, and ascension, he had pro-  
 mised to send down from heaven: So that this sin against  
 the Holy Ghost neither was, nor could be committed, when  
 our Saviour spake these words, not until the time that  
 its miraculous gifts were communicated to the apostles,  
 which

<sup>u</sup> Tillotson's Sermons, vol 1. <sup>x</sup> Matth. xii. 22. <sup>y</sup> Ibid.  
 ver. 31.

<sup>z</sup> Whitby, in his appendix to the 12th chapter  
 of St Matthew.

which was on the day of Pentecost. But (besides that our Blessed Saviour had not as yet made mention either of his own ascension, or of the mission of the Holy Ghost) since the power, whereby both he and his apostles wrought their miracles, proceeded from the same Divine Spirit, a reviling this power, when our Saviour did the miracle, must be blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, as much as it was when his apostles did it; and so the difference amounts to nothing.

A. M.  
4035. &c.  
Ann Dom  
31. &c.  
from Matt.  
xii 1. Mark  
i. 23. Luke  
vi. 1. John  
v. 1. 10  
Matt xvii.  
14. Mark  
ix 14. Luke  
ix. 37. John  
vii 1.

<sup>a</sup> Our Blessed Lord indeed, to shew that he was sent from God, wrought miracles, such as did plainly evince a divine power and presence accompanying him. These miracles (to which he frequently appeals) the Pharisees were eye-witnesses of, and therefore could not deny them; yet such was their hatred and opposition to him and his doctrine, that, rather than allow his divine mission, they were resolved to ascribe all he did to the power of the devil. Their design in this was to destroy the whole credit of Christianity, and, by making him a confederate with Satan, to represent his religion as the work and contrivance of hell, and such only as would tend to the mischief and destruction of mankind. To slander and calumniate the Son of Man, was a great sin, no doubt, but such as might more easily be forgiven them, because of his state of humiliation, and poor appearance, which might occasion their disesteem: But to represent the Spirit of God as an apostate angel, and, whatever he did for the good and salvation of mankind, as the work and intrigue of the devil, is a sin of such a horrid nature, as may well deserve a particular exemption from the general promise and covenant of pardon.

The heinousness of the sin.

<sup>b</sup> God, no doubt, can, if he will, work so powerfully upon the minds of men by his grace and Spirit, as to convince the most obstinate; and, supposing them to be convinced, and repent, it cannot be denied, but that they would be forgiven: And therefore, when our Saviour says, that such as blaspheme against the Holy Ghost, shall not be forgiven, it is reasonable to suppose, that he means, that when men are come to such a degree of inveterate malice, God (as he justly may) will withdraw his grace from them, and leave them to the bent of their perverse minds, which will insensibly engage them in a further opposition to the truth,

and why it is unpardonable.

<sup>a</sup> Tillotson's Sermons, vol. 1.

<sup>b</sup> Ibid.

A. M.  
4035, &c  
Ann Dom  
37 Sec.  
from Mat.  
xii. 1. Mark  
ii. 23. Luke  
vi. 1. John  
v. 1. 20  
Matth. xvii.  
14. Mark ix  
14. Luke  
ix. 37.  
John vii. 1.

truth, and sink them finally into perdition; so that being deserted of God, and, for want of the necessary aid of his grace, continuing finally impenitent, they become incapable of forgiveness *both in this world, and in that which is to come*. The short then of all is this, that the sin against the Holy Ghost is unpardonable, not because there is not a sufficiency of merit in Christ to atone for it, or of mercy in God the Father to forgive it, but because those who commit it are of such a refractory and incorrigible spirit, that they resist the last and utmost means of their conviction, and, consequently, neither will nor can repent; especially, if God in judgment, (as it sometimes happens,) and *because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved, should send upon them a strong delusion, that they might believe a lie.*

The mean-  
ing of eat-  
ing Christ's  
flesh and  
drinking  
his blood.

That which has made some passages in the 6th chapter of St John's gospel, and especially the command of *eat-<sup>d</sup> the flesh, and drinking the blood of the Son of Man*, a matter of so much perplexity, is the want of attending to the occasion of his discourse, and the figurative forms of expression that were then in use in the eastern nations. Our Lord, it seems, but the day before, *had fed a great number of people with a very small matter of provisions*. The day following they resorted to him, in hopes of the same bounteous supply. Our Lord, who knew their design, rebuked their greedy appetite. They, in return, reminded him of Moses's liberality, (much superior to his,) in providing them manna for the space of forty years. Hereupon our Lord took occasion to acquaint them, *that he was the bread of God, which came down from heaven*, highly preferable to manna; forasmuch as that gave only their forefathers a transitory, but this an everlasting life to the whole world: For *he that cometh to me* (continues he) *shall never hunger; and he that believeth in me shall never thirst*; and again, *I am the living* (or rather life-giving) *bread, which came down from heaven; if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever, and the bread that I will give him is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.* <sup>1</sup> *For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed: He that eateth*

<sup>c</sup> 2 Thess. ii. 10. 11.  
ver. 9. 10.  
ver. 51.

<sup>e</sup> Ibid. ver. 33.  
<sup>i</sup> Ibid. ver. 54. 55.

<sup>d</sup> John vi. 52.  
<sup>s</sup> Ibid. ver. 35.

Ibid.  
<sup>b</sup> Ibid.



*eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.*

A. M.  
4035, &c.  
Ann Dom  
31, &c.  
from  
Mat. xii. 1.  
Mark ii. 13.  
Luke vi. 1.  
John v. 1.  
to Matth.  
xvii. 14.  
Mark ix.  
14. Luke  
ix. 37.  
John vii. 1.

Now, whosoever considers the genius of the eastern languages, abounding in lofty, and sometimes abstruse, figures, and how common a thing it was, among the Jews especially, to use the metaphors of eating and drinking in a spiritual sense, viz. to denote the exercise or improvement of any of the intellective faculties of the soul, will not be much surpris'd at our Saviour's expressing himself in this manner. \* *Ho, every one that thirsteth,* (says the prophet, exhorting the people to hear his instructions,) 'come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money, come ye, buy and eat, yea, come buy wine and milk, without money and without price; and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness.' To the same purpose we frequently find Philo calling wisdom and virtue the food of the soul, which nourishes it to eternal life; and the Talmudists telling us, 'that all the eating and drinking which is mentioned in the book of Ecclesiastes, relates to the observation of the law, and good works.' Nay, manna, in particular, (according to the sense of some Jewish authors,) was an eminent type of Christ; and therefore, 'the good man,' † says Philo, 'lifts up his eyes to heaven, looking to the manna, the divine and heavenly *ἀέγιος*, the incorruptible food of the soul, that loves God;' and if this was the Jews sense of things, our Saviour was guilty of no presumption in styling himself the 'true bread which came down from heaven,' nor of any absurdity in insisting upon a metaphor which so frequently occurred in the best of their authors. The only question is, Whether our Saviour's words in this place are to be taken in a literal or metaphorical sense? *i. e.* Whether they relate to a corporeal or spiritual eating his flesh?

There is something so shocking in the very notion of one man's eating the flesh of another, that when the Jews heard our Saviour (as they imagined) discourse at this rate, they might well say, ‡ 'How can this man give us his flesh to eat?' § 'Will he cut it to pieces, and distribute to every one of us a share? It is no agreeable thought to eat human flesh; but (supposing we could bring ourselves

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3 Q

'selves

\* Isaiah lv. 1. 2.

† Maimon. More. Nev. lib i. c. 10.

‡ L. De eo quod deterius, page 137

§ John vi. 52.

• Calmet's Comment. in locum.

Not to be  
taken in a  
literal sense.

A. M. 4035 &c. 'selves to that) how could he multiply himself into so many parts, as that each of us might have one? Or how could himself subsist, if he should, in this barbarous and inhuman manner, cut and mangle his own body?' This seems to be the reasoning of the Jews upon the case: 'But, on all hands, it is agreed, that they mistook the sense of our Saviour's words, and fancied such a meaning in them as he never intended; whereas, had the literal sense been the proper and intended meaning, it is certain, that they imposed no false construction upon what he said; since, upon this supposition, he intended that this human flesh should properly be eaten, and they, in their questioning the truth of what he said, meant no more.

We may observe farther, that when our Saviour knew within himself that the abstruseness of his discourse upon this subject had given some disgust to his disciples, 'he said unto them, Does this offend you? What, and if you should see the Son of Man ascend up where he was before?' The only sense of which words can be, 'Are you offended that I thus speak of giving you my flesh to eat? Do you look on this expression *now* as a thing so very absurd and unintelligible? What then will you think of it, when this body is removed hence into heaven? *i. e.* How will you then be scared, and think it still more difficult, and more impossible to apprehend, how ye shall then eat my flesh, and drink my blood, provided ye go on to understand my words in a gross and carnal manner?' For St Athanasius has well observed, that our Saviour here mentions his ascent into heaven, that he might divert his disciples from entertaining a carnal sense of his words: And therefore his argument is,—'Since it will be then impossible for you to eat my flesh corporeally, when it is so far removed from you; by this you may perceive, that my purpose is, that you should understand my words in a spiritual sense.'

We may observe again, that when several disciples revolted upon the account of this hard saying, (as<sup>s</sup> it is called,) and our Saviour was apprehensive that his apostles might do the like, St Peter, in the name of the rest, answers him, 'Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words

<sup>p</sup> Whitby's Annotations in locum. <sup>q</sup> John vi. 61. 62.  
<sup>r</sup> Whitby's Annotations. <sup>s</sup> John vi. 60. <sup>t</sup> Ibid. ver. 68.

' words of eternal life : ' Whereas had he understood our Saviour as speaking here of oral manducation, his answer very probably would have been to this effect : ' Whatsoever appearance there may be of inhumanity, absurdness, and impossibility, in eating thy natural flesh, and drinking thy blood, yet we believe it because thou hast said it, who art truth itself, and able to make good thy words.' But since we hear nothing from him of this tendency, we may reasonably conclude, that he had no such notion of our Saviour's words. And indeed our Saviour, one would think, had done enough to explain his own meaning, when he tells us, that the eating which he intends is <sup>a</sup> ' believing on him, and that it was such an eating as would make a man <sup>\*</sup> live for ever ; that <sup>y</sup> flesh (if we could eat it) profiteth nothing, since the soul can only be nourished by spiritual food ; and that therefore the words which he spake unto them were spirit, *i. e.* were to be understood in a spiritual sense, otherwise they would not be conducive to eternal life : And therefore <sup>z</sup> Eusebius introduces our Saviour as thus addressing his disciples, ' Do not think that I speak of that flesh wherewith I am compassed, as if you must eat of that ; neither imagine that I command you to drink my bodily blood, but understand well, that the words which I have spoken unto you, they are spirit and life.' For (as St Austin <sup>a</sup> lays down the rule for the exposition of Scripture-phrases) ' If the saying be perceptive, either forbidding a wicked action, or injoining a good one, it is no figurative speech ; but if it seems to command any wickedness, or to forbid what is profitable and good, it is figurative.' Accordingly this saying, ' Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood,' seems to command a wicked thing, and is therefore a figure, injoining us to communicate in the passion of our love, and sweetly and profitably remember, that his flesh was wounded and crucified for us.' <sup>b</sup> In this sense, his flesh and blood are *ἀληθινὰ*, truly meat and drink ; because the eating of this flesh by faith in his salutary passion doth nourish the soul to life eternal ; and the drinking of his blood by faith, as that which was shed for the re-

A. M.  
4335, &c.  
Ann Dom  
31. &c.  
from Matt.  
xii. i. Mark  
ii 23. Luke  
vi. i. John  
v. i. to  
Mat xvii.  
14. Mark  
ix 14.  
Luc ix.  
37 John  
vii. 1.

3 Q 2

mission

<sup>a</sup> Ibid. ver. 47.

<sup>\*</sup> Ibid. ver. 51.

<sup>y</sup> Ibid. ver. 63.

<sup>z</sup> De eccles. theolog. lib. 3. c. 12. <sup>a</sup> De doctrin. Christian. lib. 3. c. 16.

<sup>b</sup> Whitby's Annotations on John vi. 55.



A M. *mission of sins* does refresh the person, thirsting after righteousness, and covey into him a principle of living well, and of living for ever.

4035. 1 & c.  
Ann Dom  
31 & c.  
from Matt. xii. 1.  
Mark ii. 13.  
Luke vi. 1.  
John v. 1.  
60 Matt. xvii. 14.  
Mark ix. 14.  
Luke ix. 17.  
John vii. 1.

Thus we have gone through the several objections that are usually made to the facts contained in the evangelical history of this period; and (if it would be of any farther satisfaction to those that delight to make them) we might shew, that whatever is recorded of our Blessed Saviour, the like, in one instance or other, the Heathens themselves have acknowledged in their deified heroes, and great men:

Heathen testimonies relating to this part of the evangelical history.

That the same power of curing all kinds of diseases the Greeks ascribe to their *Æsculapius*, and the Egyptians to their *Serapis* and *Isis*; That *Hadrian* (according<sup>d</sup> to *Spartianus*) was cured of a fever, by the touch of a certain blind man: That *Sesostris*, king of Egypt, upon offering a sacrifice to the god *Mnevis*, was restored to his eye-sight: That *Vespasian* (if we may believe *Tacitus*) cured a man of his lameness, and another of his blindness, by anointing his eyes with spittle, in the manner that our Saviour did; and that *Apollonius Tyanæus* (whom<sup>e</sup> *Philostratus* sets up as a powerful rival of our Lord's miracles) cured a young man that was possessed with a devil; and when he had restored him to his right senses, received him into the number of his disciples. *Simplicius*, in his *Dissertation* upon *Epicetetus*, seems to promise to all pious and wise men the power of calming the waves of the sea; and how *Neptune* rebuked and allayed the winds, which, without his permission, had raised a tempestuous storm, is a story well known, and well set off in<sup>f</sup> *Virgil*. Every poet almost mentions this same *Neptune's* riding in his chariot on the surface of the sea; and the tradition is, that to his son *Euphemus*, and his nephew *Orion*, he gave the faculty of walking upon it without fear of sinking. Nothing can be more common among the fictions of these writers, than the transfiguration of their gods upon one occasion or other; and that our Saviour's method of electing his disciples might not want a precedent in profane history, <sup>g</sup> we are told, that the famous eastern philosopher *Confucius*, out of the three thousand followers that he had, made choice of seventy-two

<sup>c</sup> *Huetii Quæst* 18. *Alnet. lib.* 3. <sup>d</sup> *Ælius Spartian. Hadrian c.* 25. <sup>e</sup> *Philost. Vit. Apoll, lib.* 4. c. 6. <sup>f</sup> *Æneid* 1. <sup>g</sup> *Martin, Hist. Sinica, lib.* 4.

two of principal note, and, out of these, of twelve only to be his more immediate companions, and to whom he committed the hidden mysteries of his philosophy: But our happiness is that the credibility of the Scripture-history wants no such weak supports as these.

A. M.  
4035. &c.  
Ann. Dom.  
31, &c.  
from Matt.  
xii. 1.  
Mark ii. 23.  
Luke v. 1.  
John v. 1.  
to Matth.  
xvii. 14.  
Mark ix.  
14. Luke  
ix. 37.  
John vii. 1.

## DISSERTATION II.

*Of the Prophecies relating to the Messiah, and their Accomplishment in our Blessed Saviour.*

ONE great evidence of our Saviour's divine mission, and, consequently, of the truth of his religion, is the completion of the ancient prophecies, relating to the Messiah, in his person, doctrine, and miracles. He indeed makes more frequent appeal to his miracles: <sup>b</sup> 'The works which the Father hath given me to finish, says he, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me.' But since, at the same time, he lays claim to the character of being the person spoken of by Moses and the prophets, when he bids the people <sup>i</sup> 'search the Scriptures, because they testified of him;' it is certain that his title to the Messiahship must be tried by the testimony of the prophets; and that all the miraculous works which he did, will not prove him to be the Messenger of the covenant, whom God was to send, unless the several predictions, which his servants the prophets gave of that renowned person, are found to unite and agree in him. It can hardly be thought, but that God almighty, who designed such an inestimable benefit for mankind, as the sending his own Son into the world for the redemption of it, should give some previous notice of his coming, and draw his picture (as it were) so much to the life and likeness, that, when the original should be brought to view, it might be known and distinguished by it. It is acknowledged, I think, on all hands, that the prophets, *at sundry times, and in divers manners*, have done this; <sup>k</sup> that each of them, in his turn, has drawn a feature, (if I may so say,) and left some masterly stroke behind him of this great personage that was to come from heaven; that one has described his parentage, another the time, another the place, and another

The completion of prophecies a proof of the truth of the Christian religion.

<sup>b</sup> John v. 36.  
at Boyle's lecture,

<sup>i</sup> Ibid. ver. 39.

<sup>k</sup> Stanhope's Sermons

A. M. ther the uncommon manner of his birth; that some have  
 4095, &c. taken notice of the most remarkable actions and events of  
 Ann Dom his life, and several of the most minute and altogether  
 31, &c. singular circumstances of his death; that by some his re-  
 from Mat surrection is foretold, by others his ascent to the throne of  
 xii 1. Mark God, and by others, the perpetual duration of his king-  
 ii. 23 Luke dom: And, if the prophets are allowed to have done this,  
 vi 1. John our only inquiry is, Whether the lineaments, which they,  
 7. 1. to in their several capacities, have drawn of the promised  
 Matt xvii. Messiah, (when all brought together,) be answerable to  
 24. Mark the account, which the evangelists have given us in their  
 ix 14. Luke history of the Blessed Jesus?  
 12. 37. John  
 vii. 1.

tho' they  
 be obscure.

We readily own indeed, that there is a great obscurity in the ancient prophecies. They are generally penned in a very exalted style, abound with so many bold metaphors, and hyperbolical expressions, so many allegories and parables, and other abstruse forms of speech, as make it very difficult for the interpreters of Scripture to discover their true scope or meaning. The prophecies relating to the Messiah are still more obscure; because, as they consider him in the different capacities of his humiliation and exaltation, unless this distinction is taken along with us, when we apply them to one and the same person, they will seem to load his character with contradictions. But still, since it is acknowledged, that the great design of prophecy was to acquaint the world with the Messiah, and that, upon whatever particular occasions God sent his messengers, he always made this one part of their errand, we can hardly believe, that he would multiply these messages to no purpose; or, when he pretended to reveal this matter to them, mock them with unintelligible words, and leave them as much in the dark as he found them. He might indeed, for wise purposes, *multiply visions, and use similitudes, m dark speeches, by the ministry of the prophets*; but in this grand discovery of all, he certainly left such indications as enabled those, who looked for the redemption of Israel, (and accordingly made it their business to search the Scriptures, and inquire into the marks of the Messiah,) to attain to a competent knowledge of them; Nor can it be well doubted, but that the Jews had some fixed and well known rules, (tho' they have not descended to us,) whereby they distinguished the passages in the prophetic

<sup>1</sup> Hosea xii. 10.

<sup>m</sup> Numb. xii. 8.



phetic writings, which related to this important subject; from any others, because we find, that <sup>a</sup> when Herod summoned the Sanhedrim together, and demanded of them where *Christ was to be born*, they readily replied at *Bethlehem in Judea*, having the prophecy of Micah <sup>o</sup> to that purpose ready to produce.

We acknowledge again, that the prophecies concerning the Messiah were delivered, not only in an obscure manner, but in different proportions, and at every distant times. Thus to Adam and Eve he was promised in general, <sup>p</sup> as a man; to Abraham, <sup>q</sup> as his posterity; to Jacob, <sup>r</sup> as descending from the tribe of Judah in particular; to David, that he should be of his family; <sup>s</sup> and the fruit of his body; to Micah, that he should be born at Bethlehem <sup>t</sup>; to Isaiah, that his birth should be miraculous, and his mother a virgin <sup>u</sup>; to the same prophet, that his death should be for <sup>x</sup> the redemption of mankind; to Daniel <sup>y</sup>, when the precise time of his suffering should be; to Haggai, lastly, and Zechariah and Malachi, that <sup>z</sup> all these events should be accomplished before the destruction of the second temple. <sup>a</sup> Now, (not to mention any more,) if we compute the seasons of these few, the general prediction of a Saviour in human nature, will be found to bear date before that of his being Abraham's seed, about two thousand and fourscore years; from this, to the declaration of his particular tribe, were two hundred and fourscore years; thence to the prophecy of his particular family, above six hundred years; after that, to the signification of his miraculous nativity, more than three hundred years; and from thence to the time of his public appearance in the world, three hundred and fifty years, or thereabouts. Now, since these prophecies were thus delivered by degrees, and at such distant and different times, it may easily so happen, that, considering them singly and apart, we may find some other person and event, to which they may be adapted, without any great violence to the text; but then the right way, in this case, to make a judgment, is, not by separate and particular passages, but by connection of the whole; by the exact coincidence, and entire agreement of all the prophecies,

A. M.  
4035, &c.  
Ann Dom  
31, &c.  
from Matt.  
xii 1. Mark  
ii, 23. Luke  
vi. 1. John  
v. 1. to  
Matt. xvii.  
14. Mark  
ix. 14.  
Luke ix.  
37. John  
vii. 1.

And delivered at several different times.

<sup>a</sup> Matth. ii. 3. &c.      <sup>o</sup> Chap. v. 2.      <sup>p</sup> Gen. iii. 15.  
<sup>q</sup> Ibid. xxii. 18.      <sup>r</sup> Ibid. xlix. 10.      <sup>s</sup> Psal. cxxxii. 11.  
<sup>t</sup> Chap. v. 2.      <sup>u</sup> Isaiah vii. 14.      <sup>x</sup> Ibid. liii.      <sup>y</sup> Chap.  
ix.      <sup>z</sup> Hag. ii. Zech. xiv. Mal. iii.      <sup>a</sup> Stanhope on the  
epistles and gospels, vol. 1.

A. M.  
4035, &c.  
Ann Dom  
31. &c.  
from Matt.  
xii. 1. Mark  
ii. 23. Luke  
ii. 1. John  
v. 1. 10  
Matt. xvii.  
14. Mark  
ix. 14.  
Luke ix.  
37. John  
vi. 1.

The pro-  
phesies re-  
lating to  
the Messiah  
fulfilled in  
our Savi-  
our.

phesies, which, at several times, denoted the Messiah, brought into one point of light, and laid together. This is the only method we have to determine the matter: And accordingly, let us now look into some of the principal passages of our Saviour's life, as it is recorded by the evangelists, and so see whether they do not exactly agree with the several characters which the prophets have given us of the Messiah.

Our Lord Jesus, we are told, <sup>b</sup> was conceived and born of a pure virgin, without the concurrence of any man: for so the prophecy had foretold, that <sup>c</sup>, *the Seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head*, and that <sup>d</sup> *a virgin should conceive, and bear a son, and call his name Immanuel*. He was descended <sup>e</sup> of the family of David, and born <sup>f</sup> at the town of Bethlehem; because, in favour to that king, God had promised that <sup>g</sup> *he would establish his seed for ever*, and that <sup>h</sup> *out of Bethlehem a Ruler of Israel should come, whose goings forth had been from everlasting*: And he was born <sup>i</sup> in the reign of King Herod, *i. e.* before the total dissolution of the Jewish government, and during the standing of the second temple; because one prophecy says, that <sup>k</sup> *the sceptre should not depart from Judah until Shiloh come*; and another, that <sup>l</sup> *the desire of all nations should come, and, by his presence, make the glory of God's latter house greater than that of the former*.

Well: but, before his appearance in the world, <sup>m</sup> John the Baptist was appointed his forerunner, and came to bear witness of him, because the Lord, by the mouth of his prophets, had said, <sup>n</sup> *Behold, I send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: o he shall cry in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight an high-way for our God*. When he made his appearance in the world he took up his chief residence <sup>p</sup> in the province of Galilee; because the prophet, speaking of the inhabitants of that country, tells us, that *upon them who*

<sup>b</sup> Matth. i. 18.      and Luke i. 26 &c.      <sup>c</sup> Gen. iii. 15.  
<sup>d</sup> Isa. vii. 14.      <sup>e</sup> Matth. i. 1. and Luke i. 27.      <sup>f</sup> Matth.  
ii. 5, 6.      <sup>g</sup> Psal. lxxxix. 4.      <sup>h</sup> Micah v. 2.      <sup>i</sup> Matth. ii. 1.  
<sup>k</sup> Gen. xlix. 10.      <sup>l</sup> Haggai ii. 7.      <sup>m</sup> Matth. iii. 1. and  
Luke vii. 27.      <sup>n</sup> Mal. iii. 1.      <sup>o</sup> Isa. xl. 3.      <sup>p</sup> Matth.  
ii. 22, 23.

‘ who dwelt before in the land of the shadow of death, <sup>A. M. 4035, &c.</sup>  
‘ did a great light shine,’ when they had it to say, ‘ Unto <sup>Ann Dom 31, &c.</sup>  
‘ us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the govern- <sup>from</sup>  
‘ ment shall be upon his shoulder,’ &c. When he came <sup>Mat. xii. 1.</sup>  
to converse in it, such was his quiet and inoffensive temper <sup>Mark ii. 13.</sup>  
and behaviour, that the prophet did not misrepresent him, <sup>Luke vi. 1.</sup>  
when he styled him <sup>John v. 1.</sup> *the Prince of Peace*, and one who <sup>to Mattha.</sup>  
<sup>xvii. 14.</sup> *who would not cry, nor cause his voice to be heard in the streets.* <sup>Mark ix.</sup>  
When he entered upon his public ministry, the very ac- <sup>14. Luke</sup>  
tions which the evangelical prophet had foretold of the <sup>ix. 37.</sup>  
Messiah, he performed to a title; ‘ for’ he preached good <sup>John vii. 1.</sup>  
‘ tidings to the meek, and proclaimed liberty to the cap-  
‘ tives; he <sup>u</sup> opened the eyes of the blind, and unstopped  
‘ the ears of the deaf; he made the lame man to leap as an  
‘ hart, and the tongue of the dumb to sing.’

But, during the course of his ministry, our Saviour, we read, lived in a very mean, obscure condition, and suffered at last a violent death: And why so? Because of the Messiah it was foretold, that <sup>\*</sup> ‘ he should be despised and  
‘ rejected of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with  
‘ grief; who should be cut off from the land of the living,  
‘ and pour out his soul unto death.’ But, for whom should he suffer all this? <sup>’</sup> For us men, and our salvation: For so it was appointed, that the Messiah should <sup>z</sup> ‘ bear our  
‘ griefs, and carry our sorrows; that he should be wound-  
‘ ed for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities;’  
because ‘ the Lord would lay upon him the iniquities of  
‘ us all.’ And in what manner was he to suffer? With a  
patience and meekness answerable to the prophecy, <sup>a</sup> ‘ He  
‘ was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not  
‘ his mouth; he was brought as a Lamb to the slaughter,  
‘ and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened  
‘ not his mouth.’

It might seem a little strange, that our Lord, who all his life time affected no popularity, should a little before his death, <sup>b</sup> make his public entry into Jerusalem, and in a manner so very singular, had not the prophet called upon ‘ the daughter of Zion <sup>c</sup> to rejoice greatly, because her  
‘ King was coming unto her, bringing salvation, lowly,  
‘ and riding upon an ass, and a colt, the foal of an ass.’

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Strange,

<sup>q</sup> Isa. ix. 2. 6.<sup>r</sup> Ibid. ver. 6.<sup>s</sup> Ibid. xlii. 2.<sup>t</sup> Ibid. xli. 1.<sup>u</sup> Ibid. xxxv. 5. 6.<sup>x</sup> Ibid. liii. 3.<sup>y</sup> Col. i. 14.<sup>z</sup> Isa. liii. 4. 5. 6.<sup>a</sup> Ibid. ver. 7.<sup>b</sup> Matth. xxi. 2. &c.<sup>c</sup> Zech. ix. 9.



A. N. Strange, that <sup>d</sup> he should be betrayed by his own disciple, to whom he had been so very kind, had not the Psalmist foretold it in these words: <sup>e</sup> ‘ Mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lift up <sup>f</sup> his heel against me.’ And strange, that of all other deaths, he should be sentenced to crucifixion, which was neither a Jewish punishment, nor proper to be inflicted for the crime of blasphemy, <sup>g</sup> that was alledged against him, had not the same royal prophet determined the matter in these words: ‘ They pierced my hands, and my feet; <sup>h</sup> they stand staring, and looking upon me.’

Such then was the will of God, that the Saviour of the world should be crucified; but in what company did he suffer? The gospel tells us, <sup>i</sup> *between two thieves*, because the prophecy had declared, that he should <sup>k</sup> *be numbered with the transgressors*. But how did the spectators behave while he was thus hanging on the cross? Just in the manner that the Psalmist described: <sup>l</sup> ‘ All they that see me laugh me to scorn, they shoot out the lip, and shake the head, saying, He trusted in the Lord, that he would deliver him, let him deliver him, if he would have him,’ What did they give him to drink in the mean time? \* A narcotic potion was generally allowed, in such cases, to stupify the sense of pain; but in his, nothing but vinegar was allowed; because the prophecy before had specified the liquor: <sup>m</sup> ‘ They gave me gall to eat, and when I was thirsty, they gave me vinegar to drink.’ And what became of his clothes? All disposed of according to the prophecy:

<sup>d</sup> Matth. x. 4.      <sup>e</sup> Psal. xli. 9.      <sup>f</sup> Levit. xxiv. 16.  
<sup>g</sup> Matth. xxvi. 65.      <sup>h</sup> Psal. xxii. 16.      <sup>i</sup> Matth. xxvii. 38.  
<sup>k</sup> Isa. liii. 12.      <sup>l</sup> Matth. xxvii. 39. &c.  
<sup>m</sup> Psal. xxii. 7. 8.

\* For this the Jews ground themselves upon the words of Solomon: *Give strong drink to him that is ready to perish, and wine to those that are of an heavy heart: let him drink, and forget his poverty, and remember his misery no more*, Prov. xxxi. 7. The usual potion of this kind was frankincense in a glass of wine; and there is a tradition among them, that the ladies of the city of Jerusalem were at this charge, out of their own good will, for the ease of the poor sufferers: But notwithstanding this custom, what God foretold was fulfilled; *Kidder's Demonstration of the Messiah*, p. 80.

<sup>n</sup> John xix. 28. 29.; Psal. lxix. 21.

phesy: <sup>a</sup> 'They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots.'

A. M.  
4035, &c.  
Ann Dom  
31. 85c.  
from Matt.  
xii. i. Mark  
ii. 23. Luke  
vi. i. John  
v. 1. to  
Matt. xvii.  
14. Mark  
ix. 14.  
Luke ix.  
37. John  
vii. 1.

But under all these provocations and indignities, what did he do? Why he prayed to God for the forgiveness of his crucifiers; because the prophet had foretold, that *while he poured out his soul unto death, he should also make intercession for the transgressors.* In his greater agonies, what were his ejaculations to God? The same that the royal Psalmist, personating the Messiah in his extremity, has left upon record: <sup>p</sup> *My God, my God, look upon me: Why hast thou forsaken me, and art so far from my help, and from the words of my complaint?* What the words wherein he gave up the ghost? The very same that the Psalmist, in another place, had prescribed: <sup>q</sup> *Father; into thy hands I commend my spirit.* But after our Saviour's death, in what manner was his body disposed of? Contrary to the custom of the Romans, who left those that suffered in this manner hanging upon the cross until they were consumed; and, contrary to the intention of his enemies, who wished him no better than a malefactor's funeral, he was honourably and nobly interred; because it was pre-ordained, that <sup>r</sup> *he should make his grave with the rich in his death.* After his burial, what became of his body? It was raised again, and restored from the state of the dead; because, in confidence of this, he laid down his life, that <sup>s</sup> *God would not leave his soul in hell, nor suffer his Holy One to see corruption.* After his resurrection, and continuance for some time upon earth, what did he do next? In the sight of his disciples, and several other spectators, ascended triumphantly into heaven; for so the divine order was, <sup>t</sup> *Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors, that the King of Glory may come in.* After his ascension into heaven, what did he finally do? Sent down the Holy Ghost upon his apostles, to enable them to propagate his religion all the world over; for such is the purport of the prophecy: <sup>u</sup> 'Thou art gone up on high, thou hast led captivity captive, and received gifts for men, that <sup>x</sup> the mountain of the Lord's

3 R 2

house

<sup>a</sup> Matth. xxvii. 35. Psal. xxii. 18.

<sup>p</sup> Luke xxiii. 34.

Isa. liii. 12.

<sup>q</sup> Matth. xxvii. 46. Psal. xxii. 1.

<sup>r</sup> Luke

xxiii. 46. Psal. xxxi. 5.

<sup>s</sup> Matth. xxvii. 57. Isa. liii 9.

<sup>t</sup> Matth. xxviii. vi. Psal. xvi. 10.

<sup>u</sup> Luke xxiv. 51. Psal.

xxiv. 7. 9. <sup>x</sup> Acts ii. 1. &c. Psal. lxxiii. 18. <sup>y</sup> Isa. ii. 2.

A. M. 4035 &c. 'house might be established on the top of the mountains,  
 Ann Dom 31, &c. 'and exalted above the hills, and that all nations should  
 'flow unto it.

from Matt. Upon the whole, then, we may perceive, that the several  
 xii. 1. Mark things which the prophets had foretold of the promised  
 ii. 23. Luke Messiah, were fulfilled in the person and actions of our  
 vi. 1. John Blessed Saviour; but then there is something farther to be  
 v. 1. to considered in this matter, and that is, the visible interpo-  
 Matt. xvii. sition of an over-ruling Providence, in the completion of  
 14 Mark these predictions. \* For that our Lord should be born of  
 ix. 14 Luke a virgin, contrary to the known laws of nature, at the city  
 ix. 37. John of Bethlehem, when he was conceived at Nazareth, and un-  
 vii. 1. der the declension of the Jewish polity, as it was predicted:

And that  
 by a visible  
 interposi-  
 tion of pro-  
 vidence.

That upon the cruelty of Herod he should be carried into Egypt, upon the succession of Archelaus, return into Judea, and settle his abode in the obscure country of Galilee, whence no good thing, much less so eminent a prophet, could ever have been expected to come: That the judge who pronounced him innocent should deliver him to death, and to the death of the cross, who (had he been guilty) must, by the law of the land, have been stoned: That he who had so many enemies should be betrayed by one of his disciples; and by a disciple who carried the bag, and consequently all his master's riches, for a vile sum of money; and that this money, the price of blood, should be employed in a work of charity, to buy a field to bury strangers in: That he who spent all his time in doing good, should be doomed to suffer among thieves and malefactors; and the multitude, who were wont to pity dying criminals, should insult and deride him in his greatest misery: That in the division of his clothes, they should cast lots for his coat, and, contrary to the usage of the country, in the midst of his agonies, give him vinegar to drink: That, contrary to the practice of the Romans, he that was crucified should be permitted to be buried, and, although he died among malefactors, have persons of the first rank and character joining together in his honourable interment: These, and several other particulars that might be produced, are so very strange and surprising, that they must needs strike every pious and devout soul with a profound sense of the unspeakable wisdom, as well as goodness of God, in accomplishing in Jesus what he had promised and foretold of the Messiah, by ways and means to human wisdom very unlikely, and very disproportionate. And, if the predic-

tions



tions relating to the Messiah have, in this wonderful manner, and by the particular direction and appointment of providence, thus met in the Blessed Jesus, like lines in one common centre, the natural result of this contemplation is, *That Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God.*

<sup>2</sup> For can it be imagined, with any worthy conception of God, that a work of love and wonder, so great as the sending his Son to redeem the world, should be in agitation for full four thousand years: that each succeeding age, in this long space, should have some notices of it; that the several characters he was to sustain, should be described by different prophets, living at times and places so remote; that no confederacy could be suspected; that each of these prophets should draw, some one line of him, and some another, and point him out, some in one capacity, and some in another; and above all, that every one of these strokes or lineaments should be directed by the unerring hand of God, to make at least one finished picture, on purpose that the original, when it appeared, might be found out, and distinguished by it; can it be imagined, I say, that a God of infinite truth, wisdom, and goodness, would have ever permitted, much less appointed, that our Blessed Lord should, in every part and line, be so exactly like that piece, unless he intended that we should receive him as the true original? Unless we can entertain a thought so unworthy of God, I say, as that he designed to impose upon us in this whole dispensation, we cannot but conclude, that he would never have permitted all the marks belonging to the Messiah, to have concurred in the life of our Blessed Saviour, and by these marks, have suffered so many millions of souls to have been mistaken in the object of their faith and worship, and thereupon, without any fault of theirs, deluded into the heinous sin of idolatry, had he not appointed the man Christ Jesus to be the great Saviour of the world, and the Lord of life and glory.

But, you are frequently mistaken (says the Jew, to avoid the force of this) in your application of these prophetical passages to your Jesus, which properly belonged to another person, and in him received their utmost accomplishment. The 22d Psalm, for instance, which complains of the sufferings and indignities which its author endured, you refer to the Messiah, and thence apply to your Jesus; whereas it relates intirely to David, and the troubles he underwent under the persecution of Saul.

‘The

A. M.  
1035. &c.  
Ana Dom.  
31, &c.  
from Matt.  
xi. 1.  
Mark ii. 23.  
Luke vi. 1.  
John v. 1.  
to Matt.  
xvii. 14.  
Mark ix.  
4. Luke  
ix. 57.  
John vii. 1.  
Which is a  
certain  
proof of  
our Savi-  
our's divine  
mission.

A. M. 4085, &c. Ann Dom 31, &c. from Matt. xii. 1. Mark ii. 23. Luke vi. 1. John vii. 1. to Matt. xvii. 4. Mark ix. 14. Luke ix. 37. John vii. 1.

“<sup>a</sup> The prophecy of Micah, which makes mention of a ruler, *whose goings forth had been from everlasting*, (whatever use you may make of it,) was only intended of Zerubbabel, who was sprung from the ancient house of David; and that famous 53d chapter of Isaiah, which is so frequently cited by the apostles, when rightly inquired into, is nothing else but a lively description of the sufferings of the Jews, under the Babylonish, or some other captivity. Thus, by misapplying, and misinterpreting several texts, in such a sense, as the Jewish church never received, and the Spirit of God never intended, you bedeck your Jesus with feathers that are none of his own, and then cry out, How well he becomes them, and how exactly they besit him !”

Answered, by shewing, that the Christian interpretation of the prophecies is true.

The completion of prophecies, in the person of our Saviour Christ, is one of the most general arguments that the first Christians made use of, in order to convert such as were persuaded of their divine authority. St Peter, <sup>b</sup> in his first public sermon that he made, out of the 16th and 110th Psalms, cites two passages, which he plainly shews, could not be intended of the patriarch David, to prove our Lord's resurrection, and exaltation to glory. <sup>c</sup> St Paul, who, by being brought up at the feet of Gamaliel, understood the force of his argument, uses more proofs of this kind, than any other writer of the New Testament, as the least cast of an eye into his epistles to the Romans, Galatians, and Hebrews, will show: <sup>d</sup> And St Matthew, who wrote his gospel for the use of the Jews more particularly, and for that reason (as some imagine) in the Hebrew tongue, is more express and copious in his application of the prophecies to our Blessed Saviour than any of the other evangelists.

Now, (to mention no more than these) how absurd would it have been for these apostles, who were no strangers to the Jewish way of arguing, to alledge any passage in the prophets as relating to the Messias, which properly belonged to another person, in whom it had its accomplishment? Such a method of proceeding could not fail of discovering their confidence and folly, of exposing them to the scorn and ridicule of their adversaries, and, instead of gaining proselytes, of ruining the cause, which by such unfair practices they endeavoured to maintain. It is but supposing

<sup>a</sup> Collins's Discourse of the grounds and reasons, p. 44. <sup>b</sup> Acts ii. 14. &c. <sup>c</sup> Ibid. xxii. 3. <sup>d</sup> Stanhope's Sermons at Boyle's lectures.

posing then, that these apostles were men of common sense, and desirous to promote the cause that they had taken in hand, and then we can hardly think, that they argued from any prophecies concerning the Messiah, but such as really belonged to him, and such as the whole Jewish church acknowledged so to do.

St Peter, by virtue of the sermon which he preached on the day of Pentecost, made about three thousand converts to the Christian faith; and yet, it is obvious that the whole hinge of his discourse turns upon the testimony of the prophets: Had he therefore applied this testimony, either to persons, to whom it did not belong, or in a sense contrary to its true intendment, his doctrine must have been exploded at once, and could never have met with such uncommon success. And, in like manner, as to the subsequent conversions which the apostles made, <sup>e</sup> how can we imagine, that such a number of Jews of all degrees, rulers, priests, and scribes of all sects, men of learning, and who, by their station and profession, were obliged to know the Scriptures, should forsake the religion they were accustomed to, upon the authority of passages, which, in their proper meaning and intendment, were so far from countenancing, that they openly confronted the new religion they were to embrace; and all this without any view of worldly interest, with the certain hazard of their lives here, and the loss of God's favour hereafter, in case of insincerity?

Upon the whole, therefore, we may conclude, that every Jew, converted to the Christian faith, is an implicit proof, that the apostles allegations of the ancient prophecies, both as to the ground and sense of them, were agreeable to their received notions of them; insomuch that, were we at leisure to enter into particulars, we might shew, that it is hardly possible to name one single prediction of the many applied to the Blessed Jesus, which one or other of their most celebrated writers do not acknowledge to belong to the Messiah.

The modern Jews, it must be owned, have fallen off from the notions of their more ingenuous ancestors, and do deny the prophecies quoted in the New Testament those views that we would ascribe to them: <sup>f</sup> But whoever considers the destruction of their city and polity, which confounded all the expectations of a glorious Messiah, and put them upon new measures in the application of such

A. M.  
1035, &c.  
Act Dom  
37, &c.  
from Matt.  
xii. 1. Mark  
iii. 23. Luke  
vi. 1. John  
v. 1. 10  
Matt xvii.  
14. Mark  
ix. 14.  
Luke ix.  
37. John  
vii. 1.

Why the  
modern  
Jews have  
departed  
from it.

pre-

<sup>e</sup> Bishop Chandler's Defence of Christianity.

<sup>f</sup> Stanhope's Sermons at Boyle's lectures.



A. M.  
4035, &c.  
Ann Dom  
31, &c  
from Mat.  
xii. 1. Mark  
ii. 23. Luke  
i. 1. John  
v. 1. 10  
Mat. xvii.  
14. Mark  
ix. 14.  
Luke ix.  
37. John  
vi. 1.

predictions as they saw must needs have been fulfilled while their state and temple stood: Whoever considers the darkness and ignorance that would necessarily ensue upon their long dispersion, and many sad calamities, when they fell into the hands of persecuting powers, who hated them and their religion most implacably: Whoever considers their neglect of applying themselves to the study of the written law, and attending wholly to their oral, and affecting to be curious in ceremonies, while they continued careless of their doctrines: Whoever considers their violent prejudice against Jesus and his disciples, which, as it stuck at nothing, though never so false or wicked, to oppose them, might easily put them upon tampering with the Scriptures, and, by interpolations or defalcations, labouring to make them look another way: And, lastly, whoever considers that judicial blindness and hardness of heart, so often and expressly threatened, and so visibly and lamentably inflicted upon this once elect people of God: (May he, in his infinite mercy, so open their eyes, that they may see the wondrous things of the law, and its agreement with the blessed gospel!) Whoever considers these things, I say, will not be at a loss for reasons why the present synagogue have departed from the sentiments of the ancient and are so earnest to apply to David, Solomon, Hezekiah, Zorabbabel, or any other person of note, what their ancestors never thought of attributing to any other than the promised Messiah.

The 22d  
Psalm not  
applicable  
to David.

<sup>a</sup> One of their famous interpreters, in his comment upon the 22d Psalm, after some feeble efforts to wrest that evidence out of our hands, makes at length this ample confession: 'Our great masters,' <sup>b</sup> says he, 'have interpreted this psalm of Messiah the King; but I shall interpret it of David himself, that we may have wherewith to answer the heretics.' But, with all his art and subtilty, he can never make it out, how David, with any propriety, can say of himself, <sup>c</sup> *As for me, I am a worm, and no man, the very scorn of men, and the outcast of the people.* The greatest affliction that ever befel that prince, was his expulsion from his capital city, upon the rebellion of his son Absalom; and <sup>d</sup> Shimei's cursing and upbraiding him may seem perhaps to countenance this complaint, <sup>e</sup> *All they that see me, laugh me to scorn, they shout out their lips, and shake their heads;* but we no where read in his history, that his enemies

<sup>a</sup> Stanhope's Sermons at Boyle's lectures. <sup>b</sup> R. Sol. Jarchi.  
<sup>c</sup> Psal. xxii. 6. <sup>d</sup> 2 Sam. xvi. 7, 8. <sup>e</sup> Psal. xxii. 7.

mies ever <sup>m</sup> pierced his hands or his feet, much less that, after they had made an end of him, they parted his garments among them, and cast lots upon his vesture. It was our Blessed Saviour alone in whom this prediction was verified; of him alone, that his enemies took up the taunting proverb, and said, <sup>n</sup> *He trusted in God that he would deliver him, let him deliver him, if he would have him*; to him alone, that these words can, with any tolerable construction, blong, <sup>o</sup> *Many oxen are come about me, fat bulls of Basban close me in on every side; they gape upon me with their mouths, as if it were a ramping and roaring lion*; as he indeed appropriates the whole psalm to himself, when, in his dying minutes, he uttered this citation, <sup>p</sup> *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?*

A. M.  
4035. &c.  
Ann Dom.  
31. &c.  
from  
Matth. xi.  
1. Mark ii.  
23. Luke  
vi. 1.  
John v. 1.  
to Matth.  
xxii. 14.  
Mark ix.  
14.  
Luke ix.  
37. John  
ii. 1.

David, indeed, in all his troubles, had no occasion to make this lamentation; for though the malice and persecutions of Saul were upon him, yet he had always abundant reason to say of God, <sup>q</sup> *Thou art my stony rock, and my defence, my Saviour, my God, and my might; my buckler, the horn also of my salvation, and my refuge: Therefore will I follow upon mine enemies, and overtake them; neither will I turn again till I have destroyed them.* His splendor and greatness, his victories and conquests, the reduction of his foes, and the enlargement of his kindom, made him a proper emblem of our Saviour's exaltation, and triumph over our spiritual enemies; but there are few passages in his life resembling of his sufferings, and none at all that will justify this complaint, <sup>r</sup> *I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint; my strength is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue cleaveth to my gums*: So true is that observation of Grotius, <sup>s</sup> *That partiality was the cause of these new explications, among the Jews, and that those which they formerly received, agreed very well with the sense of Christians.*

Upon the decree of Cyrus, for the restoration of the Jews we find Zorobabel, among other princes of the people, superintending matters, and taking upon him the government of the tribe to which he belonged; but that he should be the person intended by Micah's prophecy, is a thing impossible; because he was not born in Bethlehem, which is the place assigned for the birth of a ruler that the

Nor the  
prophecy  
of Micah  
indeed to  
Zorobabel.

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prophet

<sup>m</sup> Psal. xxii. 17. 18.  
ver. 12. 13.

<sup>n</sup> Ibid. ver. 8.

<sup>o</sup> Ibid.

<sup>p</sup> Ibid. ver. 1.

<sup>q</sup> Psal. xviii. 2. 37.

<sup>r</sup> Psal. xxii. 14. 15.

<sup>s</sup> Grotius De verit. lib. 5. sect. 18.

A. M. prophet mentions, but in Babylon, as his name imports.  
 4035, &c. That it was essentially necessary for the Messiah to be born  
 Ann Dom in <sup>t</sup> Bethlehem, and no where else, is plain from the an-  
 31, &c. swer which the scribes and Pharisees make Herod, upon  
 from his consulting them, and their quotation of Micah for the  
 Matt. xii. 1. proof of it; is plain from the general notion which, not  
 Mark ii. 23. only the learned, but the vulgar, at this time, had imbibed,  
 Luke vi. 1. viz. <sup>c</sup> <sup>u</sup> That Christ was to come of the seed of David, and  
 John v. 1. 'out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was born;'  
 to Matth. xvii. 14. and is plain from the petition in their liturgy, wherein they  
 Mark ix. 14. still pray for the advent of the Messiah, in these terms:  
 Luke ix. 37. *x* Shake thyself from the dust, arise, put on thy beautiful gar-  
 John vii. 1. ments, O my people; by the hand of Benjessè, the Bethlemite,  
 bring redemption near to my soul: So that the prophecy, in  
 all reason, must be applied to the person that was born  
 there, and not to one whose place of nativity was in a dis-  
 tant country. It is to be observed farther, that Zoroba-  
 bel was never any ruler of Israel; for though he might be  
 at the head of the captivity for some years, yet it was with-  
 out the title or authority of a governor, and when he had  
 executed his commission, he returned to Babylon, and  
 there died. But even supposing he were never so much a  
 governor, it is certainly carrying the matter too far, to say  
 of him, that he <sup>y</sup> *should stand and rule in the strength of the  
 Lord, and in the majesty of the Lord his God*; much more it  
 is so, to say, that the going forth or birth of this ruler was  
 of old, and from the days of eternity, (as the marginal  
 note has it,) which is only applicable to the Messiah, and,  
 in a proper sense, only verified in our Blessed Saviour,  
<sup>z</sup> *who in the beginning was with God.*

And, in like manner, if we consider the words of the  
 prophet Isaiah, in the 53d chapter, and compare them  
 with our Lord's history, as the evangelists have recorded  
 it, we shall soon perceive, that they are applicable to none  
 but our Blessed Saviour only; for (to wave other argu-  
 ments that might be drawn from them) with what pro-  
 priety of construction can any of these passages, <sup>a</sup> *He was  
 wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities,  
 the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and by his stripes we  
 are healed*, be applied to the Jewish nation? When ever  
 did

Nor that of  
 Isaiah to  
 the Jewish  
 people.

<sup>c</sup> Matth. ii. 1. &c. <sup>u</sup> John vii. 42. <sup>x</sup> See Bishop  
 Chandler's Defence of Christianity. <sup>y</sup> Micah v. 4. <sup>z</sup> John  
 i. 2. <sup>a</sup> Isaiah liii. 4. 5.



did we hear that the Jews bore the griefs, and carried the sorrows of others; that they were wounded for other men's transgressions, and bruised for iniquities not their own? The public calamities which God, at any time, sent upon them, are by all the prophets imputed to their own sins; but the person here afflicted is said to have done *no violence, neither was any deceit found in his mouth*; and does this character suit them under any captivity, or other sort of calamity, that the prophet might have in view? If we will believe him, it is plain, that he had another opinion of them, when, in the very beginning of his prophecy, we find him lamenting them and their captivity, in these words: *b Ah, sinful nation! A people laden with iniquity, a seed of evil doers, children that are corrupters; they have forsaken the Lord, they are gone backwards; wherefore your country is desolate, your cities are burnt with fire, your land strangers devour it in your presence, and it is desolate, as overthrown by strangers.*

The sum of our answer is this: If our Saviour and his apostles cannot be supposed, with any justness of reasoning, or prospect of success, to alledge prophecies concerning the Messiah, which the Jewish church, at that time, did not acknowledge to be intended of him; if all the prophecies thus alledged do even yet appear, by several of their most renowned doctors to be interpreted of the Messiah; if the 22d Psalm cannot, with any propriety of construction, be applied to David, nor the 4th chapter of Micah to Zorobabel, nor the 53d of Isaiah to the Jewish nation in general; and if good reasons may be assigned, why the present and ancient doctors of the Jewish church do differ in the manner of applying the predictions of the prophets; then is the Christian interpretation of them, which appears to be plain and natural, and has antiquity on its side, not to be less esteemed, because some, out of partiality and prejudice, have forced their wits to invent another.

Nay, even supposing that there were more grounds than what hitherto have appeared, to dispute the justness of the allegation of any prophecy; yet still we Christians must aver, that the application of Christ and his apostles is to be preferred before that of any other, because it was intended with such irresistible proof of its truth and fidelity, as must overbear all objections to the contrary. <sup>c</sup> For upon a dispute

A. M.  
4035, &c.  
Ann Dom.  
31, &c.  
from  
Matt xii. 1.  
Mark ii. 23.  
Luke vi. 1.  
John v. 1.  
to Matth.  
xvii. 14.  
Mark ix. 14.  
Luke ix. 37.  
John vii. 1.

<sup>b</sup> Ibid. i. 4. &c.

<sup>c</sup> Roger's Necessity of revelation.

A. M.  
4035. &c.  
Ann Dom  
31; &c.  
from Matt.  
xii. 1. Mark  
ii. 13. Luke  
vi. 1. John  
v. 1. to  
Matt. xvii.  
14. Mark  
ix. 14. Luke  
ix. 37. John  
vii. 1.

pute of the application of some passage, or a competition of two different senses of the same passage, can any thing in nature be more decisive than the testimony of God? And can the testimony of God appear by any stronger evidence than by the power of miracles supporting the allegation? God certainly knew the intention of every prophecy delivered by his Spirit; and therefore, if Christ and his apostles, when they applied any prophecy to the Messiah, gave the best proof that could be given of their being sent by God, and of their speaking and acting by his commission, God himself must be understood as confirming their application. The authority of the application, or of the exposition, must, in such a case, be equal to that of the prophecy; for there cannot be a better proof that the prophet was sent from God, than the expositor gives of his mission: and the reason for his assenting to the one as well as the other, is on both sides the same.

The result of this whole inquiry is this, — That, since our Blessed Saviour appeals to the writings of the prophets for the proof of his being the Messiah or messenger sent from God to deliver his will to mankind; and since the marks and characters which the prophets give of the Messiah, are found all to agree and unite in him, according to the account which the evangelists give us of his life, we have all the reason in the world to believe, that he was really the person he pretended to be; that his doctrine, consequently, is the word of God, and his religion <sup>a</sup> *The grace of God, that bringeth salvation, and hath appeared unto all men; teaching us, that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour JESUS CHRIST.*

<sup>a</sup> Tit. ii. 11. &c.















